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ABSTRACT

This annual report provides an overview of activities that New York's Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) undertook from October 1, 1990, to September 30, 1991, to promote the employment and independence of individuals with disabilities in New York State. Following introductory messages by three commissioners, the background and mission of the VESID and its philosophy of services are explained. Management principles and program priorities are outlined. Accomplishments of the VESID are then described, focusing on: improving access to VESID services, the State Interagency Council for Vocational Rehabilitation and Related Services, interagency coordination, enhancing independent living, intra-agency coordination, linking vocational and educational services, improving program and fiscal administration, business and industry outreach, training, social security programs, rehabilitation management services, outreach projects, public awareness activities, technology, and delivery of services through district offices. Charts are provided to provide a profile of people who received VESID services and the outcomes of such services. Appendices outline the VESID's organizational structure and list district offices, advisory council members, and independent living centers. (JDD)

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1991 ANNUAL REPORT

Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities

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1991 ANNUAL REPORT

Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities

The University of the State of New York
The State Education Department
Office of Vocational and Educational
Services for Individuals with Disabilities

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Assistant Commissioner for Policy and Program Development
EDMUND CORTEZ

Assistant Commissioner for Service Delivery
BRIAN MCLANE

Division Coordinator, Policy Development and Coordination
JOHANNA DUNCAN-POITIER

Unit Manager, Policy Development and Evaluation
CATHERINE A. SHERIDAN

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MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER

I take personal pleasure and pride in presenting the 1991 Annual Report of the Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) on behalf of the New York State Board of Regents and the State Education Department (SED).

The Annual Report provides an overview of activities that VESID undertook during the past year to promote the employment and independence of individuals with disabilities in New York State. The achievements documented in this report have come about through the effective management of resources, appropriate application of service delivery principles and procedures, and the cooperative efforts of other agencies, VESID staff, business, industry, and service providers.

Among the past year's accomplishments has been the implementation of the "Plan for Ensuring Access for Individuals with Disabilities to All New York State Education Department Programs and Services." The Plan firmly declares the commitment of the State Education Department to provide meaningful access to all Department programs, services, and employment opportunities and reflects the value we place on all citizens. It underscores the intent of the State Education Department to help people with disabilities to achieve independent, productive lives.

Take the time to read this report and reflect upon VESID's efforts and successes. Your interest and support will help promote our common goals of service.

Thomas Sobol
President of the University and Commissioner of Education

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

Thomas E. Sheldon
Executive Deputy Commissioner of Education

I am pleased to introduce the 1991 Annual Report of accomplishments of the Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID).

VESID's mission includes responsibility for coordinating the overall educational, vocational, and rehabilitation services to all persons with disabilities, regardless of age, minority status, or disability and for increasing access for people with disabilities to these services. The coordination of such services is achieved through interagency and intra-agency activities.

As Cochair of the Interagency Council for Vocational Rehabilitation and Related Services, I have had firsthand experience in ensuring that services provided by the State Education Department (SED) for persons with disabilities of any age are coordinated with programs provided by other New York State agencies. This coordination facilitates the provision of services that are nonduplicative, comprehensive, and designed to meet the needs of persons with disabilities in such a manner as to maximize the effectiveness of each agency.

In the same manner, VESID's intra-agency activities involve responsibility for the coordination of SED activities to ensure access for persons with disabilities to the wide range of services that are available through the SED. As one of the major offices of the SED, VESID is closely linked with other educational programs that can benefit individuals with disabilities. Coordination among these educational programs, such as elementary, middle, and secondary school programs, colleges, universities, and adult and continuing education programs, will provide lifelong learning opportunities, improve the employability of persons with disabilities and encourage their full and independent participation in society.

The achievements presented in this report reflect the commitment and efforts of VESID staff to the implementation of the Department's goals.

MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

During the past year, we have continued working together toward achieving VESID's mission of providing the highest quality vocational rehabilitation and independent living services to all eligible persons as quickly as those services are required to enable such persons to work and live independent, self-directed lives.

In 1991, we undertook the first steps to achieve this mission through the Access Project, which improved the methods by which VESID accomplishes intake, establishes eligibility, and plans for individualized services. During the development, implementation, and training components of the Access Project, we began to formulate the next stages necessary to improve the methods by which VESID provides services to individuals with disabilities.

The second phase of this reformation will build on the directions begun in the Access Project to further enhance the way VESID provides services to individuals with disabilities. The process of reform will focus on six components of VESID's responsibilities: integrated employment, interagency activities, educational activities, service delivery, independent living, and resource allocation. It is anticipated that this reform effort will result in fundamental changes in how we provide services.

We will also begin the process of installing the principles of Quality Management in VESID. This year we will begin the journey to becoming a system that operates from the perspective of continuous improvement rather than periodic reform.

This 1991 Annual Report provides solid evidence of the success of our efforts, but also shows that we must strive to keep VESID's mission foremost in our daily operations. The coming year will offer many challenges in assisting individuals with disabilities to reach their employment and independent living goals. I am confident that, with your continued support, we will successfully confront these challenges.

Lawrence C. Gloeckler

Deputy Commissioner for Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities

BACKGROUND AND MISSION

The Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) within the State Education Department (SED) is charged with providing and coordinating programs for persons with disabilities. VESID's mission includes an expanded role in developing and coordinating appropriate services so that people with disabilities can lead self-sufficient, self-directed lives to the maximum extent possible. This mission is to provide vocational services and coordinate lifelong educational services for individuals with disabilities to assist in expanding and enhancing their opportunities to live and work independently in their communities.

VESID assists people with disabilities in preparing for, finding, and adjusting to employment. According to federally defined eligibility criteria for vocational rehabilitation services, individuals must have a physical or mental disability that substantially impedes their ability to work in order to be eligible for VESID's services. There must also be a reasonable expectation that, as a result of the services provided by VESID, the individual will become employed.

VESID counselors work with people with disabilities to identify careers that meet their individual interests and needs. Throughout the vocational rehabilitation process, professional vocational rehabilitation counselors guide individuals in developing and completing their plans for employment. Services may include medical and vocational evaluation, educational and vocational counseling and services, job training and placement, job follow-up, and other services to support the individual's vocational rehabilitation objectives.

VESID plays a major role in the overall coordination of educational, vocational, and rehabilitation services to all persons with disabilities, regardless of age, minority status, or disability. The overall coordination of such services is achieved through interagency and intra-agency

coordination activities. VESID also develops partnerships with leaders of business, industry, and labor to meet their employment recruitment needs with skilled, qualified workers with disabilities.

In addition to providing and coordinating vocational rehabilitation services, VESID also administers Federal and State funding to 35 Independent Living Centers across New York State. Independent Living Centers are private community-based, consumer managed, nonresidential organizations that assist individuals with disabilities in living more independently in their communities.

The following annual report provides information on the priorities, major activities, and accomplishments of the Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities during 1991.

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY DISTRICT OFFICES

More than 350 professional vocational rehabilitation counselors are employed by VESID throughout the State to work with persons with disabilities. The main role of VESID counselors is to help individuals whose disabilities create a work impediment choose employment goals and plan for services so they can reach those goals. Counselors provide direct services such as counseling, guidance, and placement, as well as purchasing assessments, training, and other services from private, proprietary, and not-for-profit agencies. The services available to persons with disabilities through their vocational rehabilitation counselors include:

- **Evaluation of rehabilitation potential to determine skills, abilities and interests, possible vocational goals, and the services needed to secure employment;**
- **Career planning and vocational counseling so that persons with disabilities can achieve their career potential;**
- **Restoration services and adaptive equipment to remove or reduce limitations related to employment;**

- **Vocational and other training services through:**
  - facility-based programs
  - colleges, universities, and other postsecondary programs
  - work study programs
  - worksite training with job coaching
  - "on-the-job" programs
  - supported employment;
- **Services to family members of an eligible individual with a disability regarding the adjustment or rehabilitation of the individual with a disability;**
- **Driver/homemaker evaluation and training;**
- **Assistance with transition from school to postsecondary education, training, and employment;**
- **Assistance with support services during evaluation, training, and other primary services, such as:**
  - public transportation/special transportation
  - extra maintenance expenses
  - attendants and notetakers
  - interpreters;
- **Books, tools, and equipment needed for training and employment;**
- **Reader services;**
- **Telecommunications, sensory and other technological aids and devices;**
- **Assistance with home, vehicle, and work site modifications required for employment;**
- **Job-seeking skills training to learn how to:**
  - fill out a job application or develop a resume
  - handle job interviews successfully
  - develop other job-related skills;
- **Occupational licenses, tools, initial stocks, and supplies for a small business;**

- **Job placement and postemployment services necessary to regain or maintain suitable employment in integrated settings in the community;**

- **Other goods and services which can assist persons with disabilities to become employed;**

- **Referral to independent living services for:**

  - peer counseling
  - housing assistance
  - training in independent living skills
  - advice on other benefits for individuals with disabilities; and

- **Referral for assistance from other agencies, such as the:**

  - Social Security Administration
  - Department of Social Services
  - Office of Mental Health
  - Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities
  - Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped
  - Veterans' Administration
  - Department of Labor.

PHILOSOPHY OF SERVICES

VESID's services are predicated on the belief that people with disabilities are the primary shapers of their lives. The quality of vocational and educational services is guided by the following philosophy that focuses on the persons VESID serves:

1. VESID's services shall be provided with dignity and respect for individuals and their families; policies and procedures shall be clear, concise, readily available, and implemented consistently throughout the State.

2. VESID's services leading to employment and employment itself shall be provided in the most integrated community-based setting that is available, and shall emphasize timely and appropriate transition among educational and vocational settings.

3. VESID shall encourage every consumer to be an active participant in establishing immediate and long-range educational and vocational goals and in choosing and pursuing strategies to achieve maximum career potential.

4. The individual and the family are primary sources of information about vocational aspirations, interests, abilities, and goals as well as eligibility and need for services.

5. VESID shall collect and require only that information directly relevant to eligibility and the educational/vocational goals of the individual.

6. VESID shall avoid duplicative assessments by using existing evaluations and relying upon information provided by other agencies to the fullest extent possible, and will facilitate interagency cooperation in planning and implementing services.

VESID MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

The management of VESID's vocational, educational, independent living, and supported employment programs concentrates on making services consumer-oriented, efficient, and of the highest quality possible. VESID's fundamental management principles are:

1. **RESPECT FOR THE DIGNITY OF INDIVIDUALS**

   VESID staff will convey respect for all individuals, whether consumers and their families, other staff and management members, consumer advocates, or providers of services.

2. **CONSUMER RESPONSIVE**

   VESID will be responsive to the needs of individuals we serve and will consider these individuals and their families as partners in the service process.

3. **COMMITMENT TO QUALITY SERVICES**

   VESID's primary goal is to provide timely and high quality vocational rehabilitation, independent living, and educational services to all eligible individuals to enable them to work and live more independent, self-directed lives.

4. **COMMITMENT TO LEADERSHIP**

   VESID management will clearly define and communicate the organization's mission to the general public, consumers and their families, all staff, other agencies, providers of service, and public policymakers.

5. **OPEN COMMUNICATION**

   VESID staff will support and encourage open and timely communication, respect differing perspectives, and consider suggestions based on their merits. VESID staff will follow through on all meetings, discussions, and commitments with appropriate action and communication.

6. **PARTICIPATORY PLANNING AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

   VESID will seek and value a broad range of knowledge and experiences in the planning and policy development processes of VESID. Policies and plans will be clear, unambiguous, widely disseminated, and consistently applied.

7. **APPROPRIATE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT**

   VESID will make every effort to ensure that the operating environment of VESID offices reflects the dignity and high esteem in which we hold our consumers and staff.

8. **PROFESSIONALISM OF STAFF**

   VESID will hire, train, and effectively employ the best qualified professionals and support staff who represent the cultural diversity of the persons we serve. Excellence, honesty, hard work, responsibility, and teamwork will be valued and recognized.

9. **ENCOURAGING INNOVATION**

   VESID will encourage initiative, creativity, and flexibility to assure that its services and programs reflect new rehabilitation practices, technological advances, management techniques, and other methods to better serve consumers.

VESID PROGRAM PRIORITIES

During the past year, VESID has made significant progress in addressing the six program priorities defined by constituents, consumers, advocates, school administrators, and staff. These achievements are described further in this report. As a result of the past year's experience and input from the field, the six program priorities have been refined, as follows:

1. Integrated Employment: VESID will increase the number of people in integrated employment placements.

2. Interagency Activities: VESID will ensure that services provided by the Education Department for persons with disabilities, of any age, are coordinated with other New York State agencies and will be integrated, nonduplicative, and comprehensive.

3. Intra-Agency Activities: VESID will work with all Offices of the Department to increase the utilization of programs and services, under the auspices of the State Education Department, for all persons with disabilities.

4. Improving Consumer Services: VESID will improve and expand consumer services leading to vocational outcomes designed to meet the needs of persons with disabilities in such a manner as to encourage their full and independent participation in society. VESID will place a special emphasis on ensuring the quality of such services.

5. Fostering Independent Living: VESID will promote services and programs to enhance independent living for individuals with disabilities.

6. Management Development: VESID will improve program and fiscal management of Office procedures.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Access to vocational rehabilitation services was improved by streamlining the intake and referral process, eliminating unnecessary routine evaluations, relying on applicants for medical information, offering a wide range of service choices, and involving consumers more actively in planning services. VESID served nearly 11,500 more persons during Federal Fiscal Year 1991 than were served during the previous fiscal year.

- The quality of consumer services and programs was reviewed and strengthened through the implementation of statewide case review and monitoring protocols.

- Supported employment services, providing job supports to enable job retention, offered opportunities for more than 3,000 individuals with severe disabilities to work in the competitive labor market since the initiation of the program. During 1991, 70 supported employment projects were transferred from the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD) and 90 new programs were established under the Interagency Request for Proposals process.

- VESID collaborated with the New York City Board of Education, the State Education Department's Office for Special Education Services, other key State agencies and providers to develop the New York City Transition Center. Designed to coordinate and maximize existing resources for students with disabilities, the Transition Center is the first program of its kind to house the services of such a wide array of public and provider agencies under one roof.

- The Office of Mental Health (OMH) and VESID jointly designed and implemented Systems Integration Projects in Westchester County, Long Island, Buffalo, Syracuse, and New York City. These models of service will appropriately combine psychiatric rehabilitation services and vocational rehabilitation services.

- VESID and the Division of Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse (DAAA) jointly developed functional criteria to guide referrals of persons in alcohol abuse treatment programs toward vocational rehabilitation services.

- The State Education Department was awarded a $2.5 million grant to systematically ensure that students with disabilities receive services that will lead them from school into work or postsecondary education. Administered by VESID, this grant was developed to shift State-level initiatives on linking services to the local level and to implement the new Individuals with Disabilities Education Act requirements for transitional services.

- In an effort to improve services for individuals with disabilities through better communication among VESID, provider agencies, and schools, a technology pilot project was initiated by VESID through its Southern Tier District Office. The project promotes communication among VESID District Offices, school districts, BOCES, rehabilitation facilities, United Cerebral Palsy facilities, local Associations for Retarded Citizens, and Independent Living Centers by linking them electronically via the Technology Network Ties (TNT) System.

- VESID, in cooperation with the State Education Department's Office of Higher and Continuing Education, trained staff of 35 educational programs including Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), school districts, and community colleges on instructional strategies for adults with learning disabilities.

- Integrated Employment Units are being established in each District Office to increase employment opportunities in the community.

- VESID worked with the Department of Social Services to extend the benefits of the Jobs Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) program to persons with disabilities.

- The State Education Department's Intra-Agency Council, chaired by the VESID Deputy Commissioner, published a *Plan for Ensuring Access for Individuals with Disabilities to All New York State Education Department Programs and Services for 1991-1992.* The Plan represents the Department's commitment to making all programs and services under its purview physically and programmatically accessible.

- A Five-Year Plan for Independent Living Services was finalized with the Independent Living Advisory Council, which will direct the continuation and further development of independent living services for the years to come.

- Training was provided to VESID staff statewide to enhance their skills and knowledge about the Americans with Disabilities Act, new access policies, supervision and management, serving persons who abuse drugs and alcohol, and other rehabilitation topics.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO VESID SERVICES

During the past year, VESID has made important changes in the vocational rehabilitation service delivery system, focusing first on improving access to services for individuals with disabilities. Access begins with the initial contact by a person or referral source, continues through the assessment of the applicant's eligibility for services, and results in a VESID counselor and the individual jointly developing a plan for services leading to employment. VESID sought three primary objectives in improving access to services:

Timeliness: To provide services to individuals as quickly as possible.

Simplicity and Clarity: To simplify the steps in the process of entering the vocational rehabilitation system.

Quality: To provide the highest quality services possible.

In striving to meet these objectives, VESID received input and assistance from a variety of sources including the State Interagency Council for Vocational Rehabilitation and Related Services, other service providers, and VESID District and Central Office units. Policies were changed to make entering the vocational rehabilitation service system much easier, more understandable, faster, and more supportive of the goals and aspirations of the people VESID serves. The new policies emphasize that the individual seeking services is a key participant and primary source of information throughout the process.

The revised *Intake and Eligibility* policy improves the timeliness of services by establishing standard time frames for case processing. This helps applicants stay actively involved and discourages them from dropping out due to delays that occurred in the past. A new, simpler application form was designed to facilitate entry into the vocational rehabilitation process. Application packets, which include the application form, a fact sheet describing eligibility and services, brochures on consumer rights, the Client Assistance Program, and independent living services, were designed and made available to schools, local Departments of Social Services, and other referral sources. Each District Office works with local referral sources to help ensure that referrals are appropriate and are accompanied, wherever possible, by information VESID can use in determining eligibility and planning services.

The revised *Disability Assessment* policy requires that VESID staff use existing information whenever possible in determining eligibility. Purchasing new assessments is now limited to instances where existing reports and health assessments are insufficient. As a result of these policy revisions, health information is provided by the applicant and family which is useful in determining the individual's current health status and functional abilities.

The *Individualized Written Rehabilitation Program* (IWRP) policy describes the process of involving the applicant in choosing his or her goal, intermediate objectives, and service plan. The revised policy emphasizes consumer involvement

and requires that, in developing the IWRP, the counselor and consumer jointly consider a range of service options and possible goals.

District Office staff were trained on these policy changes in two phases. The first phase, which was timed with the distribution of the policies, concentrated on the specifics of the policies and procedures and how the District Offices were to implement the changes. The second phase provided in-depth training on the ways service decisions should be made, in keeping with VESID's mission and philosophy of focusing on the consumer of services.

As a result of the new policies, interagency activities, and other recent management improvements, the number of persons applying to VESID increased dramatically. During the Federal Fiscal Year which ended in September 1991, the number of persons applying for VESID services increased by 22 percent, while the number of persons determined eligible by VESID for vocational rehabilitation services increased by 15 percent. Data for the most recent period show that these trends are continuing for the VESID program.

INTERAGENCY COUNCIL FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND RELATED SERVICES

The State Interagency Council for Vocational Rehabilitation and Related Services was established in 1989 to coordinate services among the major State agencies which serve people with disabilities. Throughout the course of the past two years, VESID has played a primary role in many of the activities initiated through the Interagency Council. The goal of the Council is to increase employment opportunities for persons with disabilities through a coordinated service delivery system.

Through extensive involvement of consumers and providers, a major area of focus has been the identification and development of necessary policies and basic principles to improve the vocational rehabilitation service system. To establish a foundation for implementing desired change, the Interagency Council focused efforts in the following major areas:

IMPROVING ACCESS TO SERVICES

Many of the Council activities centered on increasing access to comprehensive services by bringing together providers, vocational rehabilitation counselors, and staff of other agencies to address the needs of individuals. As a result:

- An interagency referral process was agreed upon and a related form was developed and disseminated for statewide use.
- A State *Directory of Vocational Rehabilitation and Related Services* was developed and disseminated. The directory will enable individuals with disabilities, their families, and the State's work force to more readily access comprehensive information on available services.
- Functional criteria were established between VESID and the Division of Substance Abuse Services (DSAS). A statewide training program concerning the functional criteria was cooperatively provided to more than 500 staff members of DSAS licensed treatment programs and VESID District Offices.
- VESID and the Division of Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse (DAAA) also developed functional criteria to assure appropriate referrals and the delivery of timely and comprehensive services. Interagency training of staff was jointly provided in the winter of 1991.

LINKAGES WITH BUSINESS, INDUSTRY, AND LABOR

The Council made a commitment to bring together the resources of business, industry, labor, and government to plan, develop, and implement programs built on successful integrated employment initiatives. Using the resources of the Commission for the Blind and Visually Handi-

capped (CBVH), the Department of Labor (DOL), VESID, and the Department of Economic Development (DED), the Interagency Council hosted regional conferences focusing on employers. These conferences offered an opportunity for business representatives and their employees to work with local staff to develop regional plans to address the work force needs of employers.

INCREASING THE AVAILABILITY OF SERVICE OPTIONS

Development of directions consistent with the Interagency Council's Basic Principles and Operating Guidelines for Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment will improve access for individuals with severe disabilities and encourage their placement in employment and training settings integrated within their community. The following is a listing of the initial program areas agreed upon by the Interagency Council after lengthy discussion with consumers, family members, providers, and State agency staff:

- Entry criteria for supported employment;
- Career development focus;
- Multidisciplinary decision making;
- Expansion of work incentives;
- Expanded use of situational assessment;
- Clarification of the future role of sheltered workshops;
- Expanded interpretation of vocational success; and
- Expanded access to advocacy services.

CROSS AGENCY TRAINING

Cross agency training programs have brought together VESID staff and providers of services from the CBVH, DSAS, DAAA, Division of Veterans' Affairs, and the Department of Labor. Over 1,200 individuals have been trained through these initiatives. Two major training programs can be highlighted:

- VESID and the State's Small Business Development Centers cosponsored training on entrepreneurship for persons with disabilities. Over 200 people attended 10 forums held in upstate and downstate New York.

- The Interagency Referral Process Cross Systems Awareness Training was held December 12, 1991, at 14 locations across the State through the use of an interactive teleconference format. Over 1,000 State agency staff were trained on the purpose and implementation of the interagency referral process.

STREAMLINING FUNDING MECHANISMS

The Interagency Council established a Funding Work Group to review strategies for enhancing the delivery of integrated employment services, particularly supported employment. A goal of the Work Group was to provide recommendations for developing a system of services that is logical, has clear lines of responsibility, and is responsive to consumer needs and choices. The Funding Work Group is monitoring current collaborative processes to develop recommendations for future changes. These include:

- Joint planning and budgeting processes;
- New York City Unified Contract;
- Consolidated fiscal reporting; and
- Interagency reporting system.

INTEGRATION OF MENTAL HEALTH AND VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES

The Office of Mental Health (OMH) and VESID are planning policy level changes to improve service integration, program delivery, and consumer outcomes statewide. Principles for improving the integration and operation of mental health and vocational rehabilitation programs were developed through OMH/VESID consumer and provider focus groups. In addition, comprehensive policy, administration, program, and finance changes necessary to improve the accessibility and effectiveness of services are being developed through

five local Mental Health and Vocational Services Integration Projects. These five sites have developed plans to integrate psychiatric rehabilitation services with vocational rehabilitation services.

UNIFORM DATA COLLECTION

Long-Term Sheltered Employment (LTSE)

Consistent with the interagency nature of the service system, efforts have begun to establish uniform data collection procedures among the agencies. VESID and OMRDD jointly monitor and share data on sheltered workshop programs. These activities ensure a comprehensive approach to the monitoring of individuals in long-term employment in sheltered workshops.

Supported Employment

OMRDD, CBVH, VESID, and the New York City Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Alcoholism Services have jointly developed an interagency monitoring and reporting system for supported employment. The system will provide the respective agencies with sufficient information to assist in overseeing supported employment programs and enhance State level planning efforts.

INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

In addition to activities resulting from its membership on the Interagency Council, VESID continues to work closely with a variety of other State agencies to coordinate services. The following summarizes these activities:

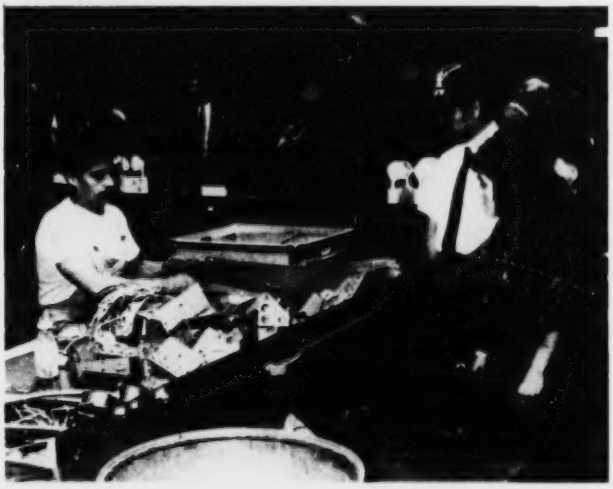
Department of Health (DOH)

VESID participates on the Department of Health's Head Injury Coordinating Council to develop community re-entry programs for individuals who have traumatic brain injuries. These programs will bring together the resources of the Department of Social Services (DSS), the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD), and VESID to develop a comprehensive system of care which will meet the residential, social, recreational, health, and vocational needs of these individuals.

VESID also serves on DOH's Disability Prevention Council which plans and coordinates ways to prevent primary and secondary disabilities.

Division of Parole (DOP) and the Department of Correctional Services (DOCS)

VESID and DOP have reviewed pilot projects at the Mt. McGregor Correctional Facility to determine how individuals who might benefit from VESID services can be identified during the discharge planning process. VESID and DOP also developed a special pamphlet to assist individuals paroled from a correctional facility in accessing appropriate services in their community.



Division of Substance Abuse Services (DSAS)

VESID and DSAS began to coordinate educational and vocational rehabilitation services to youngsters and adults in residential facilities outside of their home communities. The agencies are also exploring an employment initiative to increase employment opportunities in the private sector for persons who have abused drugs.

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Division for Youth (DFY)

VESID has been working with DFY to develop a process to assist in the transition of youngsters from DFY residential facilities to their home communities. As a part of this interagency effort, the responsibilities of VESID, DFY, the Office for Special Education Services (OSES), OMRDD, and DSS have been reviewed to determine the role each agency should play in the process.

State Division of Veterans' Affairs (DVA)

The State DVA and the Federal Veterans Administration Medical Centers in New York signed a Memorandum of Understanding which will enable VESID to access services available from the VA for veterans with service-connected and nonservice-connected disabilities participating in vocational and educational services. This agreement will enable veterans and their families to access appropriate services from both the State and Federal governments.

Department of Social Services (DSS)

VESID and DSS have reached an agreement to provide persons with disabilities with the opportunity to **volunteer** for participation in the Jobs Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) program. As a part of this agreement, VESID and DSS trained VESID District Office staff about the JOBS program's Education for Gainful Employment (EDGE) project sponsored by DSS and SED. This training was held to ensure that the education and training activities of the JOBS program are properly administered to persons with disabilities. Assistance is also being provided to DSS staff in making appropriate referrals to VESID which includes sharing available medical information when referring DSS consumers to VESID. This agreement, which clarifies payment responsibilities for the two offices, is contained in a DSS Administrative Directive Memorandum, which was recently signed and distributed to local DSS staff.

ENHANCING INDEPENDENT LIVING

VESID is committed to working with individuals with disabilities so that they can become independent members of their communities. In all activities of the Office, VESID considers ways to enhance consumer choice, self-sufficiency, and access to programs and services. These principles of independence have guided VESID's intra-agency coordination activities, policy development, delivery of services, and interagency agreements. VESID's commitment to these principles and to fortifying the consumers' role as an integral part of the vocational rehabilitation process is exemplified in its revised policies to improve access to services, which are described elsewhere in this report.

VESID is also the agency designated to administer New York State's Independent Living Center (ILC) program. VESID provides ongoing technical assistance to 35 centers located in urban, suburban, and rural settings. These centers provide personal and peer counseling, housing assistance, information and referral, advocacy, benefits advisement, transportation, assistive devices, and independent living skills training. Centers also advocate for the elimination of programmatic, architectural, and attitudinal barriers within their communities.

During the past year, VESID provided technical support services to ILCs, focusing on expansion of funding and services, training, planning, and monitoring. In addition, VESID was involved in the following activities to enhance the Independent Living Center program in New York State:

- VESID's request for additional State funding for ILCs was included in two legislative proposals: VES-3, to provide employers with technical assistance and training services that will result in increased employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities; and VES-4, to expand the role of the centers in developing disability awareness programs, peer counseling, role modeling, and other appropriate services within elementary and secondary schools.
- Efforts were undertaken to expand independent living services to American Indians with disabil-

ities. In June 1991, VESID began a six-month feasibility study to determine the need for independent living services by American Indians in New York State.

- A committee of SED, comprised of representatives from the Office of Counsel, Fiscal Management, Administrative Audit, and VESID, is developing a fee-for-service policy and procedures for linking VESID and ILCs. Representatives of the ILCs will assist Department staff in the further development of this policy, which will continue over the next year.

- Representatives from ILCs and VESID Central and District Office staff continue to improve ways in which the centers and VESID can better coordinate activities and share resources. Among the projects under development are: joint formation and advancement of legislative proposals affecting independent living in the State; methods for centers and District Offices to work cooperatively; and joint use of staff to provide technical assistance in the development of training initiatives.

INTRA-AGENCY COORDINATION

The Intra-Agency Council, established by Commissioner Thomas Sobol in September 1989 and chaired by VESID's Deputy Commissioner Lawrence C. Gloeckler, is charged with developing and ir plementing a plan to ensure that all State Education Department (SED) programs and services are both physically and programmatically accessible to individuals with disabilities. The Council, which includes a diverse membership representing all areas of the Department, provides a forum for resolving employment and service issues related to persons with disabilities within the Department.

This past year, the Council developed, published, and disseminated the *Plan for Ensuring Access for Individuals with Disabilities to All New York State Education Department Programs and Services for 1991-1992*. The Plan represents the Department's commitment to make all programs and services under its purview physically and programmatically accessible to people with disabilities. The successful implementation of the Plan will be monitored through an internal and external evaluation of anticipated outcomes. Each year, the Executive Management of the Department will review outcomes described in an annual report to the Board of Regents. Based on this annual review, additional priorities and activities may be developed to increase access.

Other specific accomplishments in intra-agency coordination over the past year include:

- Each of the major offices of SED has established an Implementation Sub-committee charged with administering the *Plan for Ensuring Access* in its respective office.

- The SED *Affirmative Action Plan* was revised to further ensure equal employment opportunities and reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

- Training for Supervisors on "Working with Employees with Disabilities" was provided to nearly 200 Department supervisors during 1991. Goals of this training include: increased awareness of the needs and capabilities of individuals with disabilities; improved skills in supervising employees with disabilities; increased access to Department policies and resources related to individuals with disabilities; and increased number of individuals with disabilities appropriately employed within the Department.

- Department publications have been made available in a wide variety of formats including braille, large print, and audio tape to accommodate the specific needs of individuals with disabilities who are Department employees, consumers, and providers of services.

- The Department *Emergency Action Plan* has been revised to reflect the needs of employees and visitors with disabilities who need special assistance in emergency situations in all Department owned or leased buildings.

LINKING VOCATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

VESID's mission includes coordinating lifelong educational services to persons with disabilities. Toward that goal, VESID has been involved in establishing important linkages between the educational and vocational rehabilitation systems.

Regional Meetings

The Regents Policies on Linking Services for Individuals with Disabilities guide Department activities in developing systemic linkages among educational, vocational, and rehabilitation service systems, and have three major components:

- the coordination and expansion of information, data, and resources;
- policies related to the secondary transition process for students with disabilities; and
- policies related to increasing opportunities beyond secondary education.

During 1991, regional meetings were conducted across the State to maintain communication among the State Education Department and local rehabilitation agencies, school districts, Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), parent advocacy groups, and Independent Living Centers. At these meetings, the Regents Policies on Linking Services for Individuals with Disabilities were described along with implementation plans. Participants in the meetings provided suggestions on priority activities and additional actions to be taken at both the State and local levels.

Statewide Transition Coordination Work Group

The Transition Coordination Work Group has been formed as an advisory committee to discuss the development and provision of transitional services at the local level. Membership on this committee consists of individuals actively involved in local or regional interagency collaborative efforts. This initiative, cosponsored by VESID, the Office for Special Education Services (OSES), and the Office of Advocate for the Disabled, will identify policy, funding, and program models for the transition of individuals with disabilities from secondary education to adult opportunities. The Transition Coordination Work Group meets three times annually to develop specific recommendations to the Education Department that will eliminate barriers to transition.

Vocational Focus Group

In New York City, a Vocational Focus Group, comprised of members of the Board of Regents and policymakers from the State Education Department and the New York City Board of Education, was formed to discuss the implementation of the Regents Policies on Linking Services for Individuals with Disabilities in New York City. A Summit Committee comprised of executive directors of rehabilitation agencies, college and adult education administrators, parents, school personnel and administrators, and major employers was created to implement goals and objectives within the five boroughs. Its mission is to develop specific strategies to improve the quality and availability of transition services for students in New York City.

An outgrowth of this group's activities was a citywide conference, "Partnerships in Transition," with attendees representing all five boroughs. The Focus Group also provided a vehicle for members of the Board of Education to work closely with staff from VESID and OSES in the development of New York City's Transition Center. Through the collocation of staff from VESID, OMRDD, OMH, and provider agencies, students in their last years of secondary school receive coordinated evaluations and services to facilitate their transition to adult education, services, and employment.

Transition Grant

The New York State Education Department was awarded a five-year, $2.5 million grant by the United States Department of Education to improve systems to help youth with disabilities make the transition from school to work and adult life. The project will be administered by VESID, in coopera-

tion with the Education Department's OSES and Office of Higher and Continuing Education, and the Department of Social Services (DSS) Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped (CBVH). The Transition Grant activities will focus on improving services for individuals with disabilities by:

- ensuring interagency coordination;
- improving occupational preparation in keeping with labor market needs;
- enhancing the preparation of qualified personnel; and
- improving access to appropriate services in colleges, universities, adult and continuing education programs.

During 1991, VESID initiated activities to:

- Train a cadre of individuals on transitional planning and service delivery to ensure specialists among parents, administrators, teachers, Committees on Special Education, and vocational rehabilitation counselors.
- Identify, coordinate, and disseminate information on programs, services, and employment opportunities for students with disabilities and their parents during the transition process.
- Establish a funding mechanism leading to the creation of Transition Coordination Sites throughout the State which will coordinate transitional programs and services within specific geographic areas.

Vocational Assessment

Two hundred eighty Committees on Special Education (CSEs) members and diagnosticians were trained on vocational assessment. The model, which incorporates effective components from vocational rehabilitation and special education, was analyzed for replication statewide. Six models of vocational assessment (e.g., mobile centers, BOCES) were visited to identify effective elements and alternative ways of providing appropriate assessments.

Parental Involvement

With input from parents throughout the State, questions and answers about vocational rehabilitation services were developed for parents of students with disabilities in the handbook, *Access to VESID Services: Questions and Answers for Parents.* The handbook will be distributed to parent organizations, CSEs, teachers, and vocational rehabilitation counselors.

Lifelong Learning

VESID played a critical role in a conference sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, "Building Effective Program Linkages." The Federal Offices of Vocational and Adult Education and Special Education and Rehabilitative Services jointly invited key offices nationwide to establish a coordinated system of lifelong learning for adults with disabilities and to develop strategies to link education programs that serve individuals with disabilities at local, state, and national levels.

As a result of this initiative, a joint policy statement was signed by the Assistant Secretary of Vocational and Adult Education and the Assistant Secretary of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. VESID will work with these Federal offices to host a follow-up session to develop strategies for the implementation of the policy statement in New York State.

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Teaching Adults with Learning Disabilities

In cooperation with the Office of Higher and Continuing Education, VESID delivered the training program, "*Teaching Adults with Learning Disabilities*" to staff of 35 educational programs including BOCES, school districts, and community colleges throughout the State. This training program provided information and skills to identify adults with learning disabilities and instructional strategies for teaching those adults in continuing education programs.

Preservice and In-service Training

VESID is working to develop modules of instruction as requested by the six New York State graduate programs in vocational rehabilitation counseling. The modules will focus on organization and administration, access to services, development of programs, and the transition process. These modules will be shared with preservice programs in educational fields and with State Education Department offices for in-service programs.

Planning Sessions

Planning sessions for Coordinators of Disabled Student Services were held on college campuses throughout the State. As a result, four new consortia, in addition to five existing groups, were developed and are meeting regularly. Through these active local networks, support services for college students with disabilities are being expanded across the State. A roundtable for presidents of colleges and universities has been called to discuss administration and commitment needed to enhance the work of Coordinators of Disabled Student Services on campuses.

Town Meetings

Town meetings with directors of continuing education are planned to identify components, barriers, and strategies to develop full service continuing education programs for students with disabilities. The five regional meetings will identify strategies to eliminate barriers to implementation and nominate local representatives to a statewide planning session.

IMPROVING PROGRAM AND FISCAL ADMINISTRATION

The administration of the State/Federal vocational rehabilitation, supported employment, and independent living programs is accomplished through the planning, policy development, quality assurance, service and provider review, and contracting processes of VESID. During the past year, a number of improvements have been made to make these processes more efficient and effective.

Policy Revision

Improvements in VESID's policies during the past year make the vocational rehabilitation program more responsive to the needs of people applying for services. Policies on Intake and Eligibility, Disability Assessment, and the Individualized Written Rehabilitation Program were revised as the first steps to improve access to rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities. The development of these policies involved staff from many of the VESID District Offices so that local issues were considered in statewide changes. Forms, application packets, data systems, and office protocol were also revised and enhanced as a result of the new policies.

Americans with Disabilities Act Responses

VESID has been instrumental in coordinating New York State's responses to proposed policy changes at the Federal level that will affect persons with disabilities. VESID prepared extensive recommendations on proposed regulations implementing the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act. Comments focused on ensuring maximum independence, integration, and safety of persons with disabilities in the workplace, transportation, telecommunications, and public accommodations. Many of these recommendations were adopted in the final regulations.

Federal Regulations

VESID also coordinated the review of proposed changes to the current Federal regulations governing the vocational rehabilitation program. Recommendations centered on expanding states' discretion to define their program policies to fit the needs of persons with disabilities in their states. These changes will support many of the initiatives that VESID has undertaken with other State agencies that were previously hindered by Federal regulation.

Reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act

In addition to these Federal regulatory changes, the Rehabilitation Act is scheduled for reauthorization in the upcoming year. VESID has held open dialogues with the members of the State Interagency Council for Vocational Rehabilitation and Related Services, the Commissioner's Advisory Council, the Client Assistance Program, vocational rehabilitation agencies in other states, and New York State's Congressional delegation on redirection of the Rehabilitation Act. Recommendations formulated to date expand the role of the individual in the rehabilitation process and ensure interagency coordination of services at the Federal level. VESID will continue the process of shaping the new Rehabilitation Act with consumers and other interested parties. National support for the directions recommended by VESID has been generated from these efforts.

Consumer Services

In order to provide effective services, VESID assists individuals who have questions about or problems with consumer services and oversees the consistency and appropriateness of services and policies through its case review process. During the last year, VESID investigated and resolved 283 complaints and inquiries by consumers regarding VESID services.

Case Review

A standardized Case Review System was implemented in all VESID District Offices to ensure that services are delivered in a consistent manner throughout the State. Review questions were designed to evaluate the District Office's adherence to Federal and State regulations, policy and procedures, as well as to analyze the timeliness of

services, management of cases, and integration of community resources in addressing the consumer's needs. The Case Review System consists of three parts:

1. an individualized Plan for Supervision, developed by counselors with their supervisors;

2. a District Office Team Review, in which a random sample of each counselor's caseload is reviewed by the District Office; and

3. a Central Office Team Review, in which a random sample of cases within a District Office is reviewed by a team consisting of the Manager of the Service Review Unit and supervisory staff from VESID District Offices other than the office being reviewed.

Supervision plans have been developed for all VESID counselors. Central Office Team Reviews were conducted in 10 District Offices, with the remaining offices scheduled for review at a rate of one per month. District Office managers are in the process of implementing the District Office Team Review in their home offices.

Quality Focus

During this past year, VESID has also ensured consistent application of Federal and State laws, regulations, and policies among the programs and agencies supported through VESID funds through the following initiatives:

- The placement of individuals in long-term sheltered employment is now reviewed annually to determine if they are working in the most integrated setting they desire. Twenty sheltered employment sites were visited last year and recommendations were made as to whether the individuals reviewed should appropriately remain in a sheltered setting, or be provided assistance leading to supported or competitive employment.

- A monitoring process for supported employment was developed in cooperation with CBVH and OMRDD. This process documents the effects of the supported employment program through quarterly reports for each individual and for each contract.

- Rehabilitation facilities seeking approval to deliver new services to VESID consumers now use simplified application forms and procedures to describe their new programs and to justify the need for the services.

VESID maintains a comprehensive vendor approval and review system to assure that District Offices obtain quality goods and services for consumers from proprietary sources. Central Office staff work closely with vendors and District Offices to ensure that services or products are purchased and delivered in an efficient and cost-effective manner. Daily contact is maintained with District Office staff and their business officers to discuss vendor issues, inquiries, exception requests, and disagreements involving vendors.

VESID responded to 2,014 written requests for technical assistance and vendor approvals during the past year. The computerized vendor files were analyzed in order to improve delivery of services by restoring accuracy to vendor records and making vendor data easier to access by District Office staff.

The contracting process was also streamlined to improve the delivery of services in a cost-effective, timely manner. Improvements included:

- Multiyear, simplified renewal contracts were implemented with approximately 225 facilities in the Unified Contract System and the Supported Employment Contract System. In addition, 25 percent more facilities joined these Contract Systems beginning July 1, 1991. This extended the overall benefits of multiyear contracts, particularly the avoidance of time-consuming contract renewal procedures for subsequent contract years.

- An automated claim review process was added to provide a comprehensive monitoring system for vocational training and supported employment contracts. VESID also improved technical assistance to rehabilitation facilities regarding claims and contract approval. This was partic-

ularly important during the recent State fiscal crisis when contract activity was suspended, facility funding was reduced, and more lengthy control agency approvals were necessary.

- Through the cooperative efforts of OMRDD, VESID's Interagency Unit, Program Monitoring and Contract Management staff, and the New York City Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Alcoholism Services, the planning, budgeting, and contracting processes among New York City supported employment service providers were improved.

Development of Key Planning Documents

- *The New York State Plan for Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment for Federal Fiscal Years 1992, 1993, and 1994* was prepared as the legal compact which describes the nature, scope, and conditions of the State's program and ensures that program administration will conform to the Rehabilitation Act and Federal regulations. The approval of this Plan by the Rehabilitation Services Administration serves as a basis for the continuation of Federal funds to VESID. This Plan was developed with the participation of many individuals, including people with disabilities, their families, advocacy groups, statewide organizations, and others.

- Three planning documents related to independent living services were drafted. The *Annual Update to the State Plan for Independent Living Services for Federal Fiscal Years 1991, 1992 and 1993* was prepared to assure VESID's continued compliance with Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act, which governs the independent living program. The Independent Living Advisory Council developed *The Five-Year Plan for Independent Living Services*, which directs services that support independent choices for all persons with disabilities in all aspects of their lives. *The Report to the Governor and the Legislature on the Service Centers for Independent Living for 1990-1991* was prepared to provide evidence of the important role Independent Living Centers play in promoting self-reliance for New Yorkers with disabilities.

- The first organizationwide *Operational Plan* for VESID was developed and implemented during the past year. This Plan is an internal document to coordinate the activities of all VESID staff in achieving the program's priorities.

Research

VESID conducted a variety of research and development activities to support VESID's efforts to better serve individuals with disabilities:

- During 1991, evaluation of the impact of VESID's new policies to improve access was initiated. Results reveal that the policy changes have reduced the time needed to determine eligibility. In addition, the total number of people that were provided VESID services increased nearly 15 percent from Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 1990 to FFY 1991.

- *Research Briefs*, an abstract service which focuses on topical areas of need identified by VESID staff, was published bimonthly by VESID to keep staff abreast of recent research developments. Counselors and other professionals were provided up-to-date information on independent living, rehabilitation technology, cultural diversity and rehabilitation, and other significant topics.

- Technical research support was provided to evaluate the impact of recent VESID policy initiatives such as:
  - development of transition services;
  - implementation of the Regents policies on linking services; and
  - extending independent living services to American Indians.

- A baseline study of technology use by consumers was conducted to determine ways to improve the provision of technology services for individuals with disabilities. The study showed that counselors need more information on the application of technology services at various points in the rehabilitation process and consumers need to be involved early in choosing

technology applications. This study led to VESID developing an information dissemination grant to secure funding to respond to these issues.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY OUTREACH

During the past year, VESID's efforts to involve business and industry in the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities have focused on three priorities:

- building a marketing framework for implementing the principles and values of VESID's mission;
- developing an organizational structure for dealing with business and industry outreach; and
- increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities across the State.

A Marketing Framework

A two-part marketing strategy focused on the needs of both employers and job-ready persons. District Office counseling units are now responsible for job placement functions, including individual job placements, job hunt clubs, and integrated and supported employment planning. In addition, New York State and VESID's 15 District Offices were aligned into six regions for the purpose of working with businesses. Outreach to specific industries is coordinated through this regional organizational structure.

Major Initiatives for Business and Industry Outreach

VESID has developed formal agreements with targeted segments of business, industry, and organized labor. The essential factors include:

- The potential for increasing integrated employment opportunities for people with disabilities at all levels of employment, including management, professional, technical, skilled, and non-skilled positions;
- The stability of employment opportunities and potential for developing closer relations between employers and special education programs; and
- Increased opportunities to provide people with disabilities with new career options, better wages, improved employer provided health care services, and opportunities for promotion.

Accomplishments this past year include:

Automobile Dealerships: An alliance was established with the Greater New York Automobile Dealers Association (GNYADA) in 1990 to pilot a program to employ persons with disabilities. GNYADA is comprised of over 500 dealerships conducting business in the eight counties of the greater New York City metropolitan area. The alliance established four major goals:

- The development of a GNYADA job network to enable member dealerships to recruit qualified workers from VESID;
- Improved utilization of educational resources and services by GNYADA members;
- Technical assistance to help members better serve consumers with disabilities; and
- An organizational commitment to meet the future needs of this industry.

During 1991, 30 VESID consumers were placed with GNYADA dealerships in New York City, Long Island and Westchester. A brochure was jointly developed by VESID and GNYADA that will be used as a marketing tool to encourage more dealerships to employ workers with disabilities. In addition, a one-week Auto Dealer Biller Clerk course was developed to train VESID consumers for this occupation. GNYADA has agreed to promote placement of students who complete this course to dealerships in Queens and Long Island as candidates for vacant billing clerk positions.

Pizza Hut, Pepsico, Inc. - The "Jobs Plus" Program: Pizza Hut, Pepsico, Inc. has an established corporate policy that recognizes people with disabilities as an important segment of their work force. Pizza Hut's national program, "Jobs Plus," established in 1988, recruits workers with disabilities for employment in corporate owned and managed restaurants and delivery units. A unique focus of "Jobs Plus" is to attract workers never before considered capable of working in integrated settings, but who are now employed through training support provided by VESID sponsored job coaches and training specialists. Pizza Hut designated VESID to coordinate the "Jobs Plus" program throughout New York State. As a result of this program, there are presently 94 individuals placed in the Pizza Hut restaurants and delivery units. The Metropolitan region of Pizza Hut (Greater New York City area) is ranked seventh in the nation, based on the number of "Jobs Plus" employees vs. number of restaurants and delivery units.

New York State American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO): VESID continued to work with the Office of the State Federation of the NYS AFL-CIO to increase access to VESID services for union members and their families. During 1991, 96 individuals from 22 Central Labor Councils or local union organizations have been referred to VESID for vocational services.

Through this alliance, outreach activities have begun in the New York City school system that will provide exposure to the unions and the union workplace. At Taft High School in the Bronx, a presentation was made to the students with special needs describing the relationship of unions to the work environment and the objectives of the AFL-CIO/VESID partnership. These students will also have the opportunity to meet with union leaders from various industries to discuss job opportunities, and to visit union worksites so that the students will have an opportunity to observe workers performing job duties in actual job settings.

The 1991 National Constitutional Convention of the AFL-CIO adopted "Resolution #79 - Workers and their Families with Disabilities," submitted by the New York State AFL-CIO. This provision declares that the New York State AFL-CIO/VESID Alliance serves as a model to encourage other states "to vigorously pursue the creation of an alliance with their State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency."

New York State Food Merchants Association (NYSFMA): This Association is comprised of 654 retail members representing major supermarket chains, food distributors, and affiliated food product manufacturers. During 1991, there was an expansion of the successful model in which major food services companies developed supermarket careers training programs in public high schools. Pathmark Supermarkets, in cooperation with the New York City Board of Education, opened the newest such program at Sheepshead Bay High School in Brooklyn in October 1991.

Marriott Corporation and New York Thruway Travel Plazas: The Marriott Corporation, known for its corporate commitment to hiring people with disabilities, received the contract as the concessionaire for the travel plazas on the New York State Thruway. During 1991, Marriott opened the three travel plazas in western New York, and through VESID's coordinated placement efforts, 18 individuals were hired. When renovations to seven additional plazas are completed, and the plazas reopen during 1992, additional jobs for VESID consumers will be available.

Regional Networks: Regional planning networks have been established within the various regions of the State to plan and promote new employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Under the cooperative leadership of VESID, the Department of Labor, the Department of Economic Development, and the Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped, these networks:

- seek to develop more effective and efficient use of public and private programs that prepare people with disabilities for employment;
- encourage government provided financial incentives, training support, and technical assistance services to business and industry; and
- enhance the involvement of people with disabilities in regional economic development and work force improvement programs.

New York State Restaurant Association (NYSRA): VESID has been working with the National Restaurant Association to create employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities in the restaurant and hospitality industries since 1978. Through the alliance with the New York State Restaurant Association, 758 individuals with disabilities were placed in jobs within restaurants and food service providers during 1991.

TRAINING

Through staff development and training activities this year, the skills and expertise of staff members of VESID and other organizations which serve persons with disabilities have been kept current. Training provided by VESID centered on the recent program initiatives undertaken to improve access to and coordination of services.

- In response to the enactment of the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), VESID presented informational training to Central Office staff and the 15 District Offices regarding the effects of the new law on public agencies, private businesses and public/private institutions. During the next year, this training will be extended to private sector businesses, such as the New York State Association of Independent Bankers.

- Two separate forums were held for VESID senior counselors to emphasize the management skills necessary to improve the productivity and efficiency of District Office counseling units. Both sessions reinforced the ways that supervising counselors can help direct service counselors improve the quality, timeliness, and consumer focus of services they provide.

- In order to effectively implement the functional criteria for referrals jointly developed by VESID and the Division of Substance Abuse Services (DSAS), professional staff of both agencies participated in regional one-day training sessions in which they learned about the reciprocal agency's services, delivery system, and eligibility criteria. This training provided an opportunity to respond to questions concerning how the functional criteria will apply in practice and to recognize the commitment of management of both agencies to coordinate services to persons who abuse drugs.

- VESID continues to maximize the important training resources available through the Regional Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program (RRCEP). During 1991, VESID counselors attended 10 programs sponsored by RRCEP, which included topics such as "Solution Oriented Counseling," "The Family in the Rehabilitation Process," "Rehabilitation of the Chronically Mentally Ill," and "Case Management in Rehabilitation." VESID continues to serve on the RRCEP Advisory Committee, which is charged with the development of training programs for state agencies throughout the Federal Region II area, which covers New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

SOCIAL SECURITY PROGRAMS

The Federal Social Security Administration (SSA) provides benefits to individuals with severe disabilities under two programs - Title II, Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Title XVI, Supplemental Security Income (SSI). State vocational rehabilitation agencies are designated to provide vocational rehabilitation services to Social Security recipients in order to assist them in obtaining gainful employment. VESID oversees all activities related to these Social Security programs, including:

- ***Case Screening.*** All beneficiaries from the Department of Social Services' Office of Disability Determination are reviewed for employment potential and individuals are contacted, registered, and referred to the appropriate VESID District Office.

- ***Case Cost Reimbursement.*** VESID manages a claims reimbursement system to recover funds from the SSA for Social Security recipients who receive VESID services, achieve employment, and earn above the threshold for substantial gainful activity. In the last Federal Fiscal Year, $6.8 million was recovered through this process.

- ***Drug Abuse and Alcohol (DA/A) Referral and Monitoring Project.*** The administration of the Social Security DA/A project includes insuring that recipients are in treatment, managing cases, and complying with Federal reporting and payment procedures.

- ***Policy Development.*** VESID actively participates in national program initiatives, including having representation on the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation's (CSAVR) Social Security Relationships Committee, as well as SSA policy and regulation work groups.

In addition to these ongoing activities, during the last year a new screening system was implemented which uses state-of-the-art "artificial intelligence" to screen cases. As a result of this system, VESID was able to increase productivity by decentralizing its screening function. The new screening system promotes a closer relationship between the screening counselors and the Social Security beneficiaries. By eliminating the need to manually screen cases, the automated system allows counselors time to contact persons who may benefit from vocational rehabilitation services and to personally encourage their participation. In addition, screening counselors can now follow up with persons who have completed programs to assist them in maintaining gainful employment. Screening units are now working in each site where DSS conducts disability determinations. Screening is currently being conducted at the Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, Albany, and Buffalo Offices of Disability Determination.

Recently, an automated system was developed to monitor the ongoing treatment requirements for individuals served under the Drug Abuse and Alcohol (DA/A) Referral and Monitoring Program for Upstate New York and Long Island. VESID's development of this unique automated DA/A program has been rewarded with a half million dollar annual contract by the SSA to administer a statewide DA/A Project and to serve as a model for other states to replicate.

VESID is also developing several efforts to provide services to special populations of Social Security recipients, such as children who are receiving SSI benefits.

REHABILITATION MANAGEMENT SERVICES

The VESID Rehabilitation Management Services (RMS) program primarily serves the needs of persons who sustain injuries on the job. The program is designed to provide rapid and intensive medical and rehabilitation case management services to injured workers as soon as possible after the injury.

Program Overview

The RMS program serves public and private sector workers with injuries at service locations in Buffalo, Syracuse, Binghamton, Albany, Poughkeepsie, New York City, and Hauppauge, with outreach services to Rochester, Elmira, and Nassau County.

During 1991, this revenue-generating program provided direct services to 941 injured workers, most of whom have back or spine related injuries. During that time, 377 persons were returned to work while 73 individuals were referred to regular VESID programs for long-term training. Last year, RMS generated nearly $300,000 in revenues from insurance carriers.

Each of the 12 professional vocational rehabilitation counseling specialists in the RMS program served an average of 80 individuals last year. The injured worker served by RMS has a work history with which the counselor can begin the vocational planning and placement process. The priority outcomes for the provision of services to these individuals are:

1. return to the same job;
2. return to the same job in a modified capacity or similar job with the same employer;
3. return to different work with the same employer;
4. return to similar work or different work with a different employer; or
5. return to work after training or retraining.

RMS has initiated practices that continue to produce savings in the public and private sectors while restoring injured workers to gainful employment. Last year's accomplishments include:

- VESID completed a pilot project to provide service to injured State employees at the Wassaic Developmental Center. During this reporting period, over 400 persons have been returned to light or full duty positions at the Wassaic Developmental Center. Since the inception of the project, numerous additional State agencies have asked VESID for assistance in returning injured workers to the job. These include Buffalo Psychiatric Center, Monroe Developmental Center, Willard Psychiatric Center, and SUNY Health Science Center in Syracuse.

- VESID continues to participate on the Workers' Compensation Rehabilitation Task Force. This Task Force was created in response to the Governor's request that the Workers' Compensation Board, VESID, and the State Office of the Advocate for the Disabled work together to propose legislation for the 1992 legislative session in the area of rehabilitation services for workers' compensation claimants. Other participants include representatives of the legal, medical, education, and insurance communities.

- RMS expanded its services in three additional district office service areas. These include the Southern Tier District Office, the Mid-Hudson District Office, and the Hauppauge District Office covering Suffolk County.

- RMS has explored new methods of service delivery and expansion of opportunities for workers with disabilities by working with rehabilitation centers including the Albany Rehabilitation Center and the Riverfront Medical Services.

OUTREACH PROJECTS

VESID seeks to extend the benefits of vocational rehabilitation services to groups of persons with disabilities who have traditionally been unserved or underserved. During the past year, outreach efforts focused on American Indians, persons of Hispanic and Korean cultures, veterans, persons with AIDS, and persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Reaching Out to Native Americans About Independent Living

In June 1991, VESID began a six-month study to determine the need for independent living services by Native Americans in New York State. The

study, conducted by Regents Fellow Lois M. Jircitano, J. D., will identify the prevalence and nature of disabilities that exist within the Indian Nations' reservations and in communities in close proximity to them. The study will also determine if Native Americans are being adequately served through existing Independent Living Centers.

Hispanic Outreach - Bronx

The Bronx District Office continues its Hispanic Access Initiative. The Office maintains two bilingual, bicultural counselors, and a counselor assistant whose mission is to serve the needs of the growing Hispanic population in the Bronx. Through this effort, services are now reaching a previously underserved population.

Serving Veterans with Disabilities-Manhattan

The Manhattan District Office has begun a variety of activities to serve veterans with disabilities. The Office was represented at the Department of Labor's first Puerto Rican and Latino Veterans Awards Event. A vocational rehabilitation counselor served as a liaison to both the Vietnam Veterans Outreach Program and to the Korean War Veterans Association, and assisted the U.S. Postal Service in its Veterans Recognition Program. Because of significant contributions to these groups, the counselor was made an honorary member of the Korean War Veterans organization.

Job Fair Serves Mid-Hudson Region

The Mid-Hudson District Office Placement Unit provides direct services to consumers, counseling staff, and business and industry to develop and enhance job opportunities for VESID consumers. A local newsletter was started in two counties to alert employers to job ready applicants who might fill the employers' job vacancies. Under the guidance of the placement counselor, a coalition of public and private sector agencies and employers was formed in Ulster County. The coalition sponsored the first Annual Ulster County Job Fair/Expo with the Mid-Hudson Project With Industry in fall 1991.

Korean Community Outreach - Queens

The Queens District Office is also reaching out to underserved populations. Staff are working with Korean community representatives in Flushing to introduce the services available through VESID and other agencies to that community.

Employment Project - Syracuse

Services to minority and deaf populations in the Syracuse area have been improved because of the increased emphasis the District Office has placed on these previously underserved consumer groups.

Serving Persons with AIDS - Manhattan

The Manhattan District Office is working with Beth Israel Hospital to develop two programs to provide employment to persons with AIDS. The programs will highlight the services available from VESID and establish methods for easy access to services.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons

VESID recognizes the task of meeting the vocational and educational needs of the deaf and hard of hearing population in the State of New York. During 1991, VESID Central Office staff and representatives from the deaf and hard of hearing communities developed plans concerning issues that present barriers to providing the full range of VESID services to consumers. Activities undertaken are as follows:

1. The State Plan for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons is being revised based on the input and guidance of representative groups. VESID is planning regional forums to identify the needs of citizens who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf developmentally disabled.

2. Access to services for individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing will be addressed in VESID's Phase II activities to improve the delivery of services. This effort will ensure that the

concerns of the deaf and hard of hearing communities are included in the reform of service policy.

3. Special training for rehabilitation counselors for the deaf is being developed and will detail counseling strategies and identify information resources for serving persons with hearing impairments.

4. A plan for recruiting qualified staff will result in an increase in the number of persons who are deaf or hard of hearing working throughout VESID. Initial steps include requesting resumes of deaf and hard of hearing individuals to be considered whenever VESID offices have the opportunity to fill positions, based upon the current availability of resources.

5. The New York State Department of Civil Service is working with VESID and the Deaf Consortium on issues of job placement and upgrading within the Civil Service system.

6. The payment system for interpreter services is of primary concern, especially the rates of reimbursement for interpreter services to deaf and hard of hearing consumers. Proposals to increase rates are currently being evaluated by VESID. Plans to expand interpreter service contracts and to upgrade the quality of the interpreter evaluation process within the State of New York are also being reviewed.

PUBLIC AWARENESS ACTIVITIES

VESID staff throughout the State actively promoted October 1991 as National Disability Employment Awareness Month. The following activities were initiated:

- ***Public Service Campaign.*** VESID and the New York State Association of Rehabilitation Facilities (NYSARF) cooperatively developed two public service announcements (PSAs) to promote the theme of employing people with disabilities in New York State. Targeted specifically to employers and personnel responsible for hiring, the PSAs focused on the ability of qualified workers with disabilities to meet job challenges and labor force needs within the community. The message that running a successful business requires a group of workers with enthusiasm, dedication, and skill is portrayed through an analogy of a business person climbing a steep rock incline. This analogy is coupled with a narrative that workers with disabilities are qualified and able to meet job challenges. Roll-in portraits of confident workers with disabilities lead in to VESID's toll-free number (1-800-222-JOBS) for more information.

  The PSAs sponsored by VESID and NYSARF were first aired on cable stations in September 1991. They were distributed by the Cable Television Association of New York to all cable franchises for insertion in cable programming during October. In addition, the PSAs were distributed to 31 commercial stations throughout the State.

- ***New York Learns.*** The State Education Department's Public Broadcasting Program series, *New York Learns*, featured *Employing Workers with Disabilities* on October 1, 1991. The program focused on the key role of workers with disabilities in meeting labor force needs and the partnerships which VESID has developed among business, industry, and labor to meet these needs.

  The program featured Lawrence C. Gloeckler, Deputy Commissioner of VESID, and Michael McIntyre, Executive Director of the Queens Independent Living Center. Invited guests included leaders from business, industry, and labor who represented alliances which VESID established during the past year. Among these guests were Edward Panarello, Director of Retirement and Health Care Program of the AFL-CIO; Mark Schienberg, Executive Vice President of the Greater New York Automobile Dealers Association; Sandra Stock, Director of Human Resources for the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza; and Scott Campbell, Market Manager of Pizza Hut. The moderator of the program was Chris O'Donoghue of WOR, Channel 9, in New York City.

- ***Dairy Associations.*** A number of New York State dairies agreed to use the side panel of their milk cartons to promote October 1991 as National Disability Employment Awareness Month: Hermany Farms (Bronx, Manhattan, Westchester); Stewart's Rosebud Dairies (covers five northern counties); Homestead Dairies (covers three northern counties); Byrne Dairies (covers from Rochester-Watertown-Utica-Elmira); Gold Medal Farms (Manhattan, Bronx, Queens, Westchester); and Boice Dairy (Kingston).

- ***Utility Companies.*** The Rochester Telephone Company and the Rochester Gas and Electric Company included flyers in their October billings regarding employing people with disabilities.

- ***Media Package.*** A media package was developed for all District Offices to use in promoting National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

TECHNOLOGY

The rapid pace of technology is creating new opportunities for individuals with disabilities in the workplace and the community. VESID's challenge for today and the future is to stay informed of those new developments in order to provide the most efficient and effective services available. VESID has developed innovative approaches to the use of technology resources to enable individuals with disabilities to become more independent and to assist those who serve these individuals to be more effective in their support. The projects discussed below demonstrate VESID's initiatives in technology.

Department of Labor JobLink Database

With the completion of necessary technical connections between the Department of Labor (DOL) and the State Education Department, VESID has the capability of accessing DOL's database, JobLink, from all District Offices. This advantage enables rehabilitation counselors to become more aware of current job markets and requirements and, as a result, affords more immediate communication between the VESID rehabilitation counselor and the DOL job placement counselor.

Home Modification Database

This project reflects VESID's goal of providing leadership in the use of technology to enhance independent living for its consumers. Through the use of multimedia technology, the Home Modification Database will allow a consumer to review a participating realtor's database to identify housing that is accessible for individuals with disabilities. When no accessible housing is found in the region where the consumer wishes to live, the database provides a computer assisted design to graphically

modify available houses to meet the consumer's needs. The resulting modification is produced in a report listing potential contractors who modify houses and estimate costs. With this report, the consumer is better prepared to decide on the affordability of the housing in his or her area of interest.

Southern Tier and United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) Technology Network

The Southern Tier and UCP networks were developed as a pilot for a statewide system to provide an electronic network to a cross section of private and public service providers which VESID uses. Types of information shared include State/local reports, information on available funding and grants, reports required by the Education Department, and general mail.

DELIVERY OF SERVICES THROUGH DISTRICT OFFICES

The District Offices have been actively engaged in providing quality services to individuals with disabilities across the State. During the first full year of the implementation of the Access Policies, the Offices received the greatest number of referrals in the last 10 years. These referrals were processed more quickly and efficiently through new orientation sessions, methods of securing existing medical reports, and improved technology that have helped improve the delivery of timely services.

Stronger interagency relationships to enhance the provision of services were achieved on the local level through the efforts of District Office staff. Activities were initiated with businesses and industries to provide new opportunities for integrated employment. Programs were begun with other State and private agencies serving individuals with disabilities to maximize existing resources and link services. Liaisons were established between District Office staff and local alcoholism agencies and substance abuse programs. Local cooperative activities were established with schools including joint planning for students with disabilities, transition activities, and promoting drug and alcohol prevention to youth. Additionally, relationships with Independent Living Centers continue to be strengthened in many localities focusing on mutual interest issues to provide improved services to individuals with disabilities.

The following is a brief description of each District Office and some of the specific activities conducted by these offices during 1991.

Albany

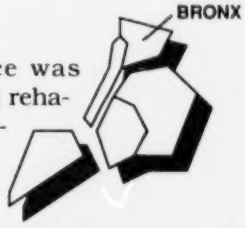
The Albany District Office serves the counties of Albany, Columbia, Greene, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Schoharie, Warren, and Washington. Counselors in the District Office serve as resource experts on vocational rehabilitation issues and give presentations to many community groups on topics such as learning disabilities, traumatic head injury, employment issues for people with disabilities, and veterans' benefits.

The District Office worked closely with the Hudson Valley Community College to establish a Computer Aided Drafting and Design Program, enrolling 15 VESID consumers in the first class. A cooperative venture with the Glens Falls Independent Living Center was initiated to establish a support group for women with disabilities in Glens Falls. This group, jointly facilitated by VESID and Independent Living Center staff, discusses topics such as coping with a disability, treatment, physical therapy, and employment.

Supported employment continues to be a growing placement option in the Albany area. The Albany District Office now has 27 supported employment contracts with service providers. During the year, five new service providers were brought into VESID's Unified Service Contract

System which raised the number of Unified Contracts within the Office to 13. The Office is now responsible for managing 40 supported employment and unified service contracts with a total value of over $2.2 million.

Bronx



The Bronx District Office was established to bring vocational rehabilitation services to those previously unserved individuals with disabilities in Bronx County who are best served in their home communities. VESID staff work closely with a variety of schools, hospitals, and rehabilitation facilities to meet the needs of people with disabilities.

Specifically, there are 17 high schools, 2 Adult Skills Training Centers, 1 Occupational Training Center, and many private high schools in Bronx County. The New York City Board of Education has identified over 5,000 students with special needs in these schools. VESID counselors visit Bronx high schools in order to directly serve students with disabilities.

VESID counselors work closely with four rehabilitation facilities, a large number of private and voluntary hospitals, five municipal hospitals, two State psychiatric centers, the Bronx Developmental Center, and the Bronx Veterans' Administration Hospital. Counselors generate new referrals to VESID and other county programs that serve people with disabilities.

The Bronx Office has worked to improve the timely and efficient delivery of services to consumers. Two weekly orientation sessions are held to bring consumers into the system quickly. These sessions are conducted by the marketing and employment counselor and have allowed the Office to more quickly serve consumers.

The Bronx Office continues to expand its utilization of supported employment programs as an option for consumers. The Office works cooperatively with OMRDD and the New York City Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Alcoholism Services, to provide technical assistance and support to programs providing integrated employment. VESID's Business and Industry Unit has redoubled its efforts to provide individualized job-seeking skill services to consumers to ensure appropriate placement in the community. To further enhance placement, the Office remains an active participant in the New York City Placement Consortium, along with the Department of Labor and the Bronx Economic Development Corporation.

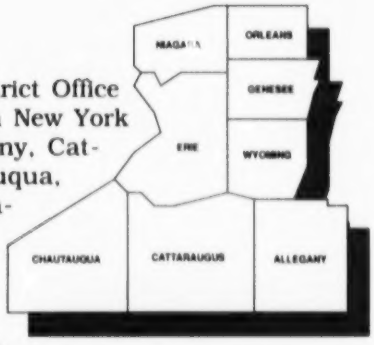
Brooklyn

The Brooklyn District Office serves Kings County, the largest borough in New York City. The Office focuses on outreach, particularly with high schools to reach students with disabilities who need assistance with the transition from school to work.

Efforts to improve access to services have resulted in a significant increase in referrals; the Office caseload is now at an all time high of 5,500 consumers. When an application is received, a case is opened and assigned to a counselor within a maximum of seven days; within the next 10 days, the counselor makes an appointment for the person to come in for an initial interview to ensure that people have a good understanding of what VESID can offer them and what rights and responsibilities they have as consumers.

The Brooklyn District Office works in partnership with the New York City Board of Education and the 34 Brooklyn schools it serves. Intensive joint planning resulted in a successful staff development day involving all Brooklyn VESID school liaison counselors and the Transitional Linkages Coordinators from these schools. The occasion brought together staff from the two separate High School Superintendencies in the borough, Brooklyn high schools, and Brooklyn and Staten Island schools. Designed to share information and experience, the one-day forum included formal presentations, question and answer periods, and small group discussions.

Buffalo



The Buffalo District Office serves the Western New York Counties of Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans, and Wyoming. Included in these counties are 151 public and private secondary schools, 5 BOCES Districts, 19 two- and four-year colleges and universities, and 6 business schools.

This territory includes large urban areas such as Buffalo and Niagara Falls; small cities like Lockport, Tonawanda, North Tonawanda, and Batavia; small villages and suburbia; and rural areas such as Allegany, Wyoming, and Orleans Counties.

Services were provided by the Buffalo District Office to over 10,000 individuals during 1991. Over 1,000 consumers were employed as a result of services provided by Buffalo District Office staff.

The Buffalo District Office actively participated in the Western New York Employment Consortium, which has approximately 30 member agencies, including BOCES, OMRDD, and most of the service providers who have programs for supported or transitional work. VESID has been designated as the central referral agency for this interagency consortium. The consortium sponsored a conference entitled "Future Sourcing," for human service professionals, including 45 employers.

The Office continues to be very active in activities for students aging out of school. The Aging Out Committee of Western New York is comprised of parents, service providers, educators, and consumers. Established in 1984, this group has been meeting monthly to address the issues resulting from the transition of young adults with disabilities from the educational to the adult service system. "A Guide for Aging Out Services" was compiled and distributed through schools to parents and consumers.

A close working relationship has been developed with the Center for Therapeutic Application at State University of New York at Buffalo. This relationship provides assistance to consumers in obtaining computers, assistive devices, and other technology.

Hauppauge

The Hauppauge District Office serves the rehabilitation needs of the residents of Suffolk County, which is a suburban and rural county in the southeast portion of Long Island in New York State. A satellite office serves the rural east end of Suffolk County, which allows for more efficient delivery of services and greater access for consumers to their counselors.

An exciting new pilot project was begun by OMH and VESID to provide a new dimension of service to people with severe and persistent mental illness in Suffolk County. The Clubhouse of Suffolk receives funding from both OMH and VESID to provide a psychiatric rehabilitation model. The scope of VESID's services has been expanded to permit VESID consumers to use the Clubhouse of Suffolk, which is a consumer-oriented and consumer-driven program.

Supported employment programs have expanded to 14 contracts with 9 providers with a goal of serving 151 consumers in Suffolk County this year. A supported employment providers group meets monthly with OMRDD and VESID staff of the Long Island region to brainstorm on improving supported employment services to consumers. Programs with Pizza Hut and the Greater New York Automobile Dealers Association were initiated with success and illustrate the progress and efforts made toward expanding integrated employment options for people in the community.

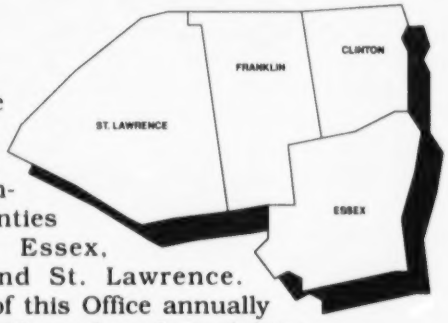
Hempstead

The Hempstead District Office provides services to people with disabilities in the County of Nassau through its main office in Hempstead and two outstations, one at the BOCES County Center in Westbury and the other at North Shore University Hospital. Nassau County has 56 school districts with over 17,000 students identified as having disabilities. In addition, a school for the deaf, a large State psychiatric center serving in-patients, and a number of outpatient clinics are included in the Hempstead District Office's catchment area.

The rehabilitation counselor for the deaf at the Hempstead District Office has developed a job seeking skills program specifically for people who are deaf and has implemented a testing/screening program to determine the academic level of low functioning consumers who are deaf. This counselor has provided sensitivity training and sign language support to the rehabilitation providers serving individuals who are deaf and mentally ill to expand services to these populations.

The Office has been an active participant in VESID initiatives with business and industry. Seminars on issues relating to placement of individuals with disabilities have been provided to leading employers in Nassau County. Successful placements have been made with Pizza Hut, the Greater New York Automobile Dealers Association, and the hospitality industry.

Malone



The Malone District Office serves the four northernmost counties of Clinton, Essex, Franklin, and St. Lawrence. VESID staff of this Office annually serve over 2,500 people with disabilities in 86 rural communities by means of automobile, telephones, facsimile equipment, a newly installed 800 number, and shared office space in many local communities.

The implementation of the new policies to improve access has resulted in an increase of 65 percent in new referrals to the Malone Office and an active caseload of over 1,700, with an average of 188 consumers assigned to each counselor.

Counselors maintain regular contacts with small businesses and companies, placing many consumers directly into competitive jobs, setting up job tryouts, on-the-job training programs, work study programs, and transitional employment programs. An active Summer Youth Employment Program in St. Lawrence County, cooperatively run by VESID, BOCES, school districts, and JTPA, placed 40-55 youths in jobs to gain work experience and training.

Manhattan

The Manhattan District Office provides services to the Boroughs of Manhattan (New York) and Staten Island (Richmond) with specific liaison arrangements with many of the municipal, private, and voluntary hospitals, facilities, schools, treatment programs, a facility for persons who are emotionally disturbed, and a special outreach project for young persons who are deaf.

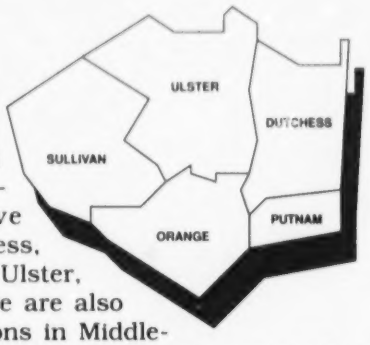
Special liaisons were also arranged with the Multiple Sclerosis Society, the Asian-American Task Force, Substance Abuse and Alcoholism Programs on Staten Island, the Business Advisory Council of "Project Trabajo," and the Manhattan Cooperative Service Model Program.

The Manhattan District Office has increased the number of consumers served during this past year. The total number of people served in 1990 was 3,759, increasing to 4,355 served in 1991. This represents a growth rate of 10 percent in the number of persons served.

Manhattan District Office staff participated in planning meetings and on the Advisory Committee

for the Independent Living Center at Harlem Hospital, one of two funded nationwide by the Federal government in areas of special need.

Mid-Hudson

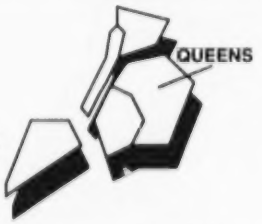


The Mid-Hudson District Office provides vocational rehabilitation services to the five counties of Dutchess, Putnam, Sullivan, Ulster, and Orange. There are also two satellite locations in Middletown and Kingston. Counselors are assigned to work with each school district in the region. The staff work with eight different rehabilitation facilities and have close ties with local two- and four-year colleges.

The Office maintains a high profile in the community through participation on local BOCES Occupational Education Advisory Councils and JTPA Private Industry Councils which directly affect VESID consumers. This past year, VESID has played an important role in a consortium of State, County, and City of Poughkeepsie agencies in sponsoring a one-day training seminar, "The Drug and Alcohol Connection: Linking Youth Training and Employment Programs with Prevention and Treatment."

Programs with the four local Independent Living Centers (ILCs) continue. Regularly scheduled meetings afford staff from VESID and each ILC the opportunity to focus on topics of mutual interest and concern.

Queens

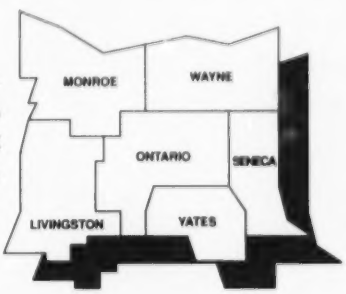


The Queens District Office serves Queens County, which includes 26 high schools, 2 special education centers, and the Lexington School for the Deaf. In addition, there are a number of private high schools, many of which serve students with special needs. Liaison counselors are assigned to all the high schools, as well as the larger special schools. A counselor with manual communication skills is stationed at the Lexington School for the Deaf and the adjacent Lexington Center and serves high school students as well as unemployed former students who participate in the adult programs offered at the Lexington Center. VESID high school liaison counselors meet monthly with transitional staff of the High School Superintendent's Office and the local coordinators to increase the understanding of the two systems and to use joint programs to the fullest extent possible.

The Borough is the site of large psychiatric hospitals (e.g., Creedmoor Psychiatric Center, Hillside Hospital, Holliswood Hospital). In order to meet the needs of persons discharged from these hospitals who need vocational rehabilitation services, the Queens District Office has four counselors whose caseloads are comprised exclusively of individuals with psychiatric disabilities. Joint planning with advocates and professionals concerning emotional illness has resulted in programs designed to meet specific identified needs. Two counselors also serve the many substance abuse programs located in Queens.

The Queens District Office received 1,927 referrals of persons seeking services through the end of August 1991, compared to 1,602 during the same period in 1990. A Group Intake Process established to implement VESID's changes to improve access is working well; not only are more people being referred, but service is being provided in a more timely manner. The Office continues to reach out to underserved populations. Activities were organized with the Korean community in Flushing to introduce services to that area.

Rochester



The Rochester District Office serves consumers in six counties: Monroe, Livingston, Ontario, Seneca, Yates, and Wayne. In this six-county area, school

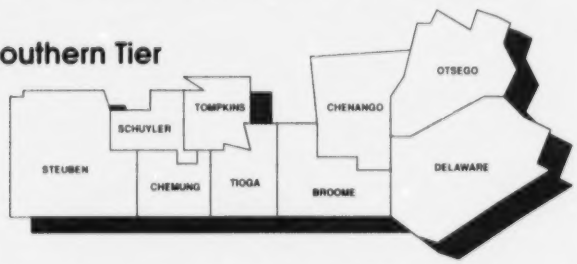
liaisons work with all the high schools as well as the four area BOCES.

Services are also coordinated with the two psychiatric centers, two developmental centers, numerous mental health centers, the local epilepsy group, the learning disability agency, as well as local agencies which work with spinal cord injuries, multiple sclerosis, and cerebral palsy.

In order to handle a significant increase in referrals as a result of the new policies to improve access, the Rochester Office hired two additional rehabilitation counselors and a rehabilitation counselor assistant. The Office is now using rehabilitation counselor assistants for the intake process and has developed a group orientation program to introduce VESID to potential applicants. In cooperation with Finger Lakes BOCES, a new assessment and placement program was developed to enhance services to consumers in the area.

Working closely with the local office of the Department of Labor (DOL), the Rochester VESID Office has the placement services of one DOL counselor on a half-time basis. The DOL has also made their microfiche job openings file available to consumers at the Rochester Office.

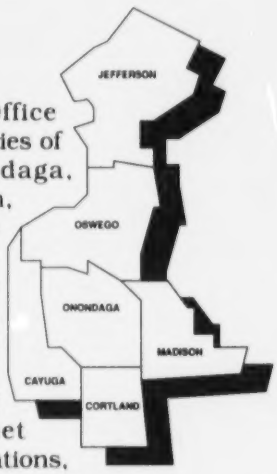
Southern Tier



The Southern Tier District Office has a nine-county service area. The Binghamton Office serves the counties of Broome, Chenango, Delaware, Otsego, and Tioga. A satellite office in Elmira provides services to the counties of Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben, and Tompkins.

A technology pilot project was initiated by VESID in the Southern Tier to improve communication among agencies and to share data. The project promotes communication among the VESID District Office, school districts, BOCES, rehabilitation facilities, United Cerebral Palsy facilities, local Associations for Retarded Citizens, and Independent Living Centers by linking them electronically via the Technology Network Ties (TNT) system.

Syracuse



The Syracuse District Office provides services in six counties of Central New York (Onondaga, Oswego, Jefferson, Madison, Cortland, and Cayuga). The District Office is headquartered in the State Office Building in Syracuse, with a satellite office on Syracuse Street and counselors outstationed in the five outlying counties. Counselors meet with consumers in these locations, as well as in schools, businesses, rehabilitation facilities, and referring agencies.

This was a year of steady growth for the Syracuse Office. Consumers are served by the improved Access project application and registration system. Meeting weekly, the District Office management team searched for ways to allocate resources and change procedures so that consumers' eligibility could be determined more quickly and services could be provided more readily. By year's end, applications were up 20 percent.

Services to people in rural areas, as well as to minority and deaf individuals, were also improved. A new liaison assignment was developed at St. Joseph's Hospital, the site of a cooperative OMH/VESID supported employment and intensive rehabilitation project. Local efforts under statewide agreements with Pizza Hut, the AFL-CIO, and Marriott Corporation were initiated with success. Summer work programs, operating in conjunction with JTPA and job coach providers, emphasized VESID's commitment to improved school to work transition.

Utica

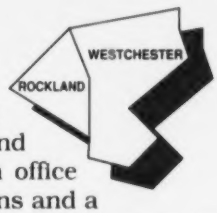
The Utica District Office serves the counties of Oneida, Herkimer, Lewis, Fulton, Hamilton, and Montgomery. Outstation offices are located at the Rome School for the Deaf and in the City of Johnstown.

The Office provided an extensive Summer Youth Employment Program in cooperation with the Private Industry Council dedicated to providing valuable work experience for students with disabilities. These summer jobs, when combined with work-study experiences and vocational counseling to facilitate school-to-work transition planning, provided essential components for competitive and supported employment placements. Counselors work on a year-round basis with the four BOCES and area school districts to coordinate vocational rehabilitation and educational services as part of the transition process.

The Office plays an important role as a member of a local consortium of supported employment providers. Monthly forums address topics of interest designed to maintain cooperation and enhance communication within this network. The District Office established supported employment service contracts with eight area service providers which resulted in increased options for integrated employment for a large number of individuals with disabilities. The Johnstown Office, serving a largely rural population, has developed a cooperative job placement network called the Resource Employment Project (REP). Employment opportunities developed by a member agency are fed to a central computer bank located at the Department of Labor's Community Center and are made accessible to all REP participants.

To meet the rehabilitation needs of consumers who have orthopedic disabilities, hospitals and other rehabilitation providers have been identified to conduct functional capacity evaluations and work adjustment training. Agreements have been made to provide these services through the Oneida City Hospital's Return to Work Center and the Lewis County General Hospital's Work Recovery Center. Counselors thus have another tool available to assist consumers in exploring employment options.

White Plains



The White Plains District Office serves residents of Rockland and Westchester Counties, with office locations at two sites, White Plains and a satellite unit in Orangeburg. The service area is diverse, with both urban and suburban characteristics. Counselors have liaison assignments to the various school districts, residential facilities, public and nonprofit organizations which reflect the cultural diversity of the two counties.

A major initiative during the last year involved the expansion of VESID orientation groups and individual intake sessions. Applicants, service delivery professionals, family members, and advocates can now more easily obtain information about applying for VESID services. Information on the availability of orientation groups is widely disseminated, and individuals are informed that they can attend meetings on a "walk-in" basis if the Office is notified by the day before the scheduled meeting. A counselor is available to help an individual complete an application and develop a preliminary plan of action. Often, service begins immediately following the initial group meeting.

A local work group was organized to discuss program options and program development for supported employment services for individuals who are deaf and profoundly hearing impaired. Improvement in services for individuals with traumatic brain injuries was addressed through sessions facilitated by the Traumatic Brain Injury Network. The format included participation from selected service providers and the use of case materials as a teaching-learning tool.

The physical environment of the White Plains District Office was enhanced through collaboration between VESID and the community mental health service. An art exhibit of works of participants of the Harlem Valley Psychiatric Center was displayed throughout the Office, demonstrating the creativity of individuals while simultaneously making the office a more attractive place for visitors and staff.

PROFILE OF THE PEOPLE WE SERVED

Through a network of 15 district and 7 satellite offices across New York State, the Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) served 88,593 persons during 1990-91, an increase of nearly 11,500 persons over the previous Federal Fiscal Year.

New referrals to VESID were also up from the previous year. Compared to last Federal Fiscal Year, nearly 11,000 more persons, or a total of 47,663 persons were referred to VESID for services during this year's reporting period. These referrals came from a variety of sources. The largest referral source included former consumers and self-referrals. This category accounted for 20 percent of all new referrals. The education system, specifically elementary/secondary schools and special schools for students with disabilities, was the second largest source of referrals comprising 18.8 percent. Other groups referring significant numbers of individuals with disabilities included hospitals and other public and private organizations.

VESID has once again demonstrated its commitment to providing vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with the most severe disabilities. Of all individuals rehabilitated in 1990-91, 63.1 percent had disabilities that severely limited their ability to work and live independently.

Persons with orthopedic impairments continue to make up the largest percentage of individuals served by VESID (26.3 percent). Individuals diagnosed as having a mental illness (19.9 percent), or mental retardation (15.3 percent) also made up significant portions of those served by VESID.

Most persons served by VESID were young (61.8 percent were younger than 35) and were males (59.3 percent). Over 69 percent of the people served by VESID were white and 18.7 percent were black. Educational information shows that at the time of referral 19.3 percent of individuals served received education beyond high school.

During the year, 9,001 persons were placed in suitable employment, of whom 68 percent were working in competitive jobs in the community.

The following charts provide an overview of people who received VESID services during the past year (10/1/90 -- 9/30/91) and the outcomes of such services.

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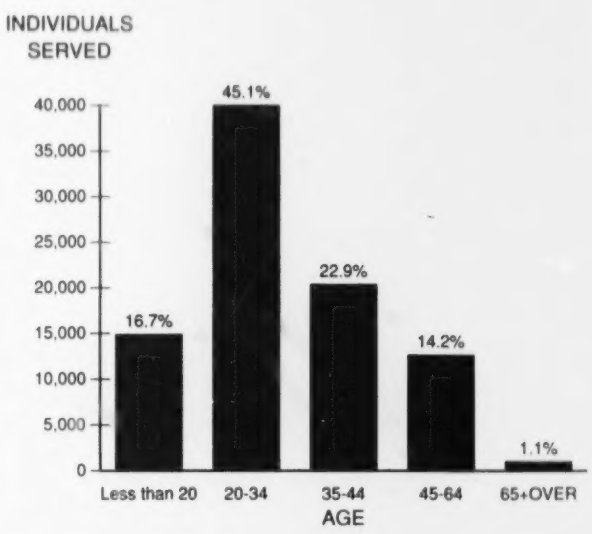
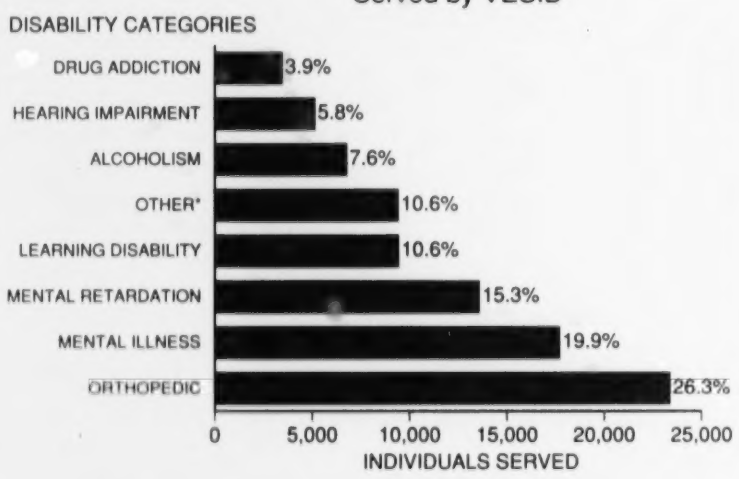
Age at Referral of Individuals Served by VESID



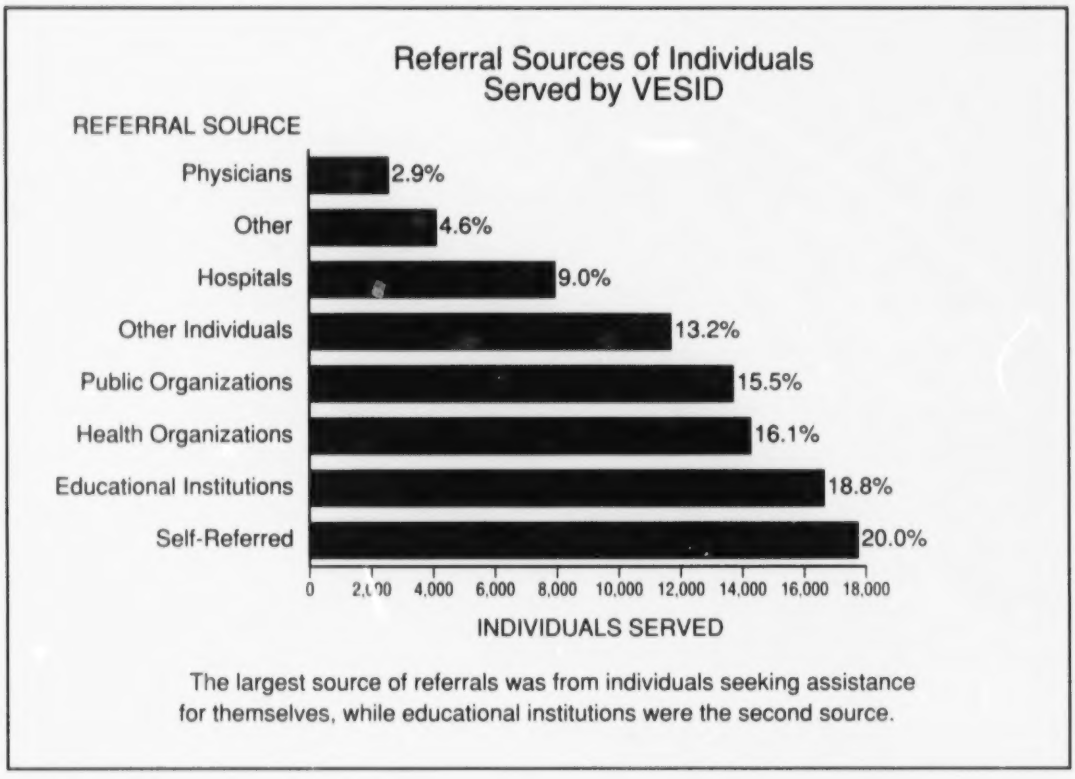
Although most persons served by VESID are young adults between the ages of 20-34, services are available to individuals of all ages.

Disability of Individuals Served by VESID

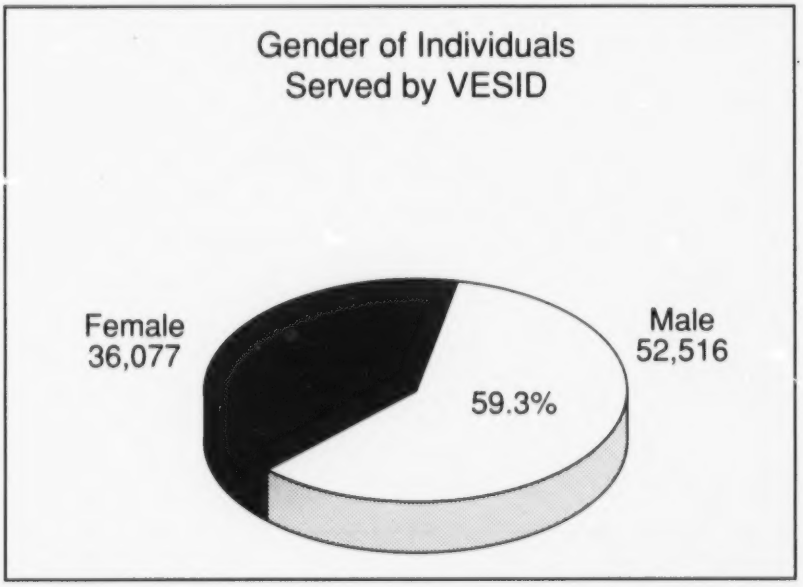


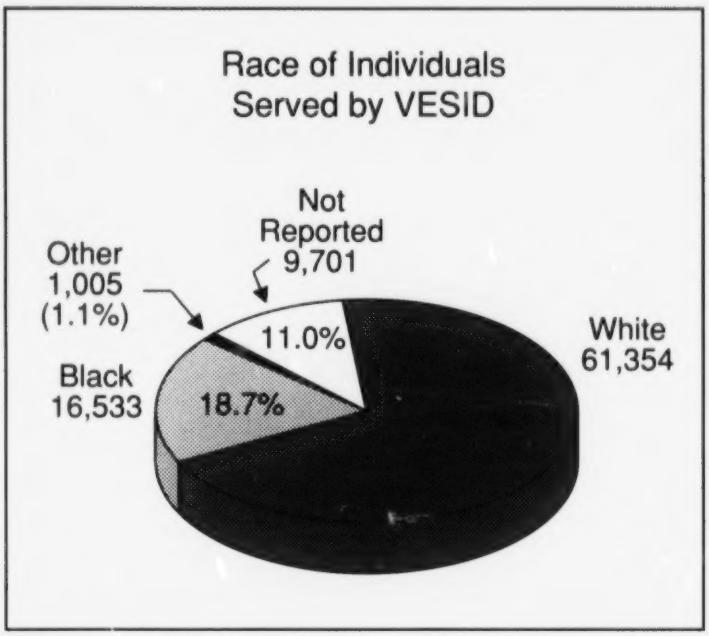
Persons with orthopedic impairments continue to be the largest group served by VESID.

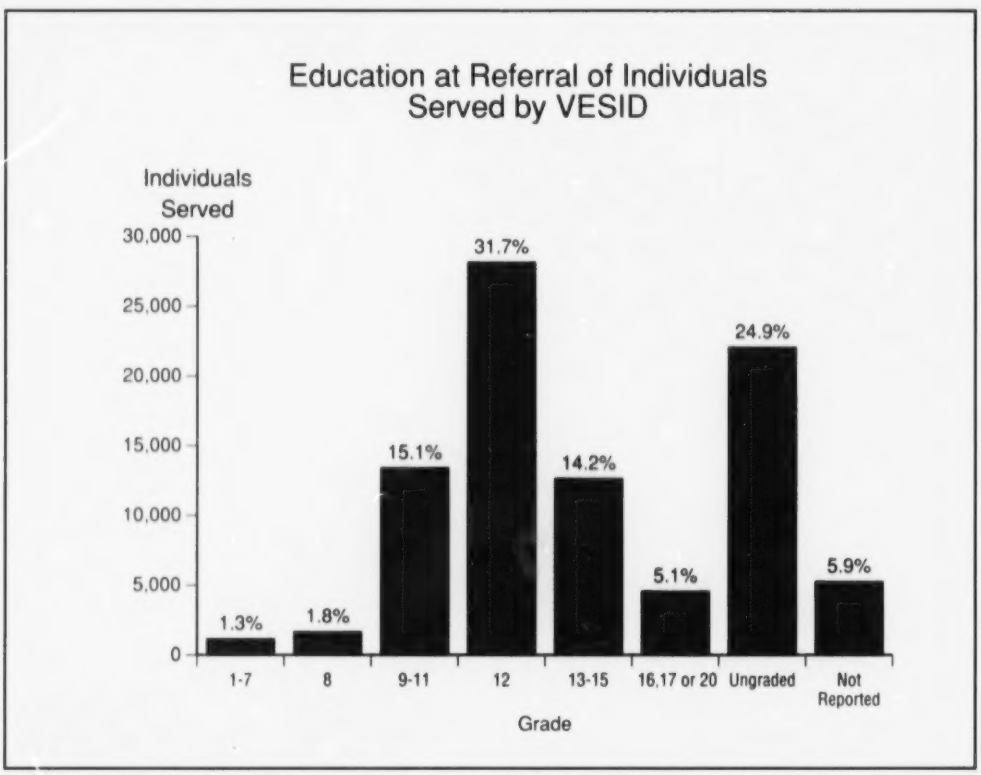
* "Other" includes disabilities such as visual impairments, epilepsy, respiratory diseases, and speech impairments which were less than two percent of the total served.



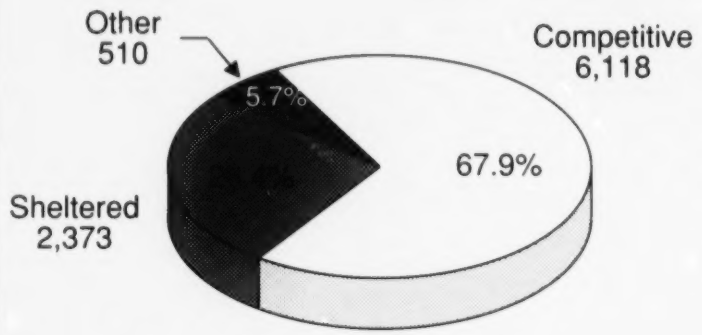
The largest source of referrals was from individuals seeking assistance for themselves, while educational institutions were the second source.




Race of Individuals
Served by VESID
Not
Reported
9,701
Other
1,005
(1.1%)
11.0%
White
61,354
Black
16,533
18.7%

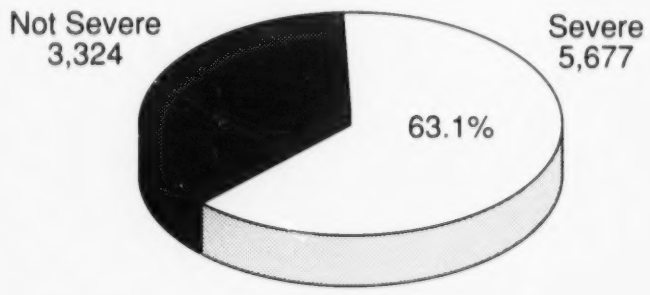

Education at Referral of Individuals
Served by VESID
Individuals
Served
30,000
25,000
20,000
15,000
10,000
5,000
0
1.3%
1.8%
15.1%
31.7%
14.2%
5.1%
24.9%
5.9%
1-7
8
9-11
12
13-15
16,17 or 20
Ungraded
Not
Reported
Grade

Types of Employment of Persons Rehabilitated by VESID



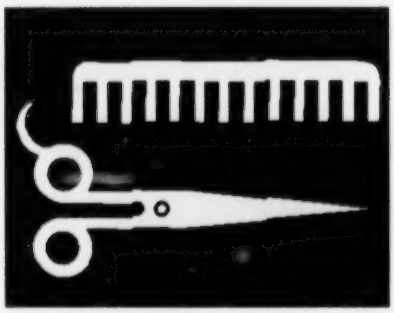
Competitive employment includes those individuals placed in integrated employment in the community through the 15 district offices working together with employers, rehabilitation facilities,Independent Living Centers, and other public and private providers. A total of **9,001 persons were rehabilitated** during the 1990-1991 Federal Fiscal Year.

Severity of Disability of Persons Rehabilitated by VESID

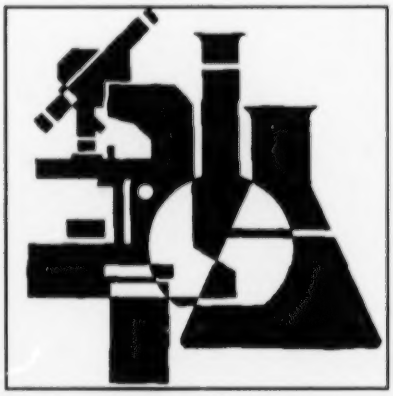


The majority of people rehabilitated by VESID had severe disabilities.

Clerical and Sales
1,886



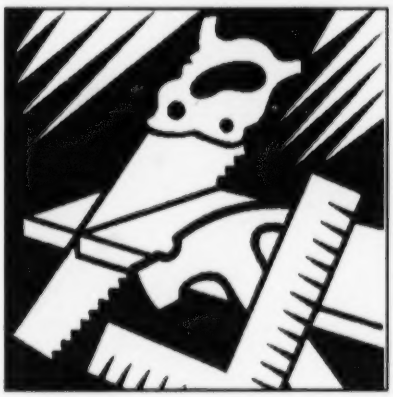
Service Occupations
1,697



Professional, Technical, and Managerial Occupations
1,003

Other Jobs for Pay
472

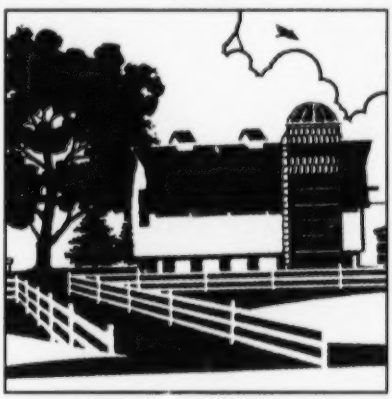
OCCUPATIONS OF PERSONS PLACED IN THE COMPETITIVE WORKFORCE



Structural Work
367

Machine Trades
328

Benchwork
328



Farming, Fishing, and Forestry
88

APPENDICES

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

VESID is one of the six major offices of the State Education Department. Administrative and field staff are located in the Central Office in Albany, while the direct service staff are located in 15 District Offices, 7 satellite offices, and a number of outstation locations throughout the State. Within VESID, two Assistant Commissioners serve under the Deputy Commissioner for Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities, who reports directly to the Commissioner of Education.

Administrative Support

The Deputy Commissioner's Office contains the Administrative Support Unit which coordinates all centralized administrative functions of VESID. This unit is responsible for:

Management Services, which handles personnel, purchasing, fiscal reporting, budgeting, statistical reporting, and data entry;

Social Security, which oversees activities necessary to provide VESID services to Social Security recipients and to maximize reimbursements for services; and

Contract Management, which coordinates all VESID contracts, including the renewal of approximately 100 State and Federal Supported Employment grant contracts. In the past year, this unit has coordinated the transition of between 200 and 300 Supported Employment contracts from the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD) to VESID.

Provider Review regulates proprietary vendors who supply goods and services to VESID consumers. The unit works with vendors, District Offices, Central Office units and other state and Federal regulatory agencies to assure that appropriate care is used in procuring services.

Office of Service Delivery

The Assistant Commissioner for Service Delivery is responsible for two major functions: Local Operations, and Business and Industry Outreach.

Local Operations

The Coordinator of **Local Operations** supervises the activities of the District Offices, local interagency activities, the independent living program, and the Rehabilitation Management Services Program.

The **District Office Administration Unit** is responsible for the operation of the District Offices across New York State. District Office operations are intended to enhance integrated, community-based opportunities for employment and independent living for persons with disabilities.

The Local Interagency Coordination Unit acts as a resource and technical advisor to District Offices, and to VESID's Interagency Agreements Unit. It ensures that local efforts of the District Offices are coordinated with VESID's statewide plans and policies, including those of the Interagency Council and with those of other local, Federal, State, and private agencies. The Unit assists in resolving local interagency service delivery issues, implementing the State Interagency Council agreements at the local level, and providing information to VESID's State Interagency Council liaisons regarding local interagency problems.

The **Rehabilitation Management Services (RMS) Program** provides quality rehabilitation services to injured workers in the most timely and cost-effective manner possible to assist employees to rapidly return to work. Under Section 15.9 of the New York State Workers' Compensation Law, funds derived from insurance carrier payments for work related deaths, where there is no beneficiary, are appropriated to VESID to support this program. When fully operational, RMS will be self-supporting through the generation of revenues.

The **Centers Unit** is responsible for administering the Statewide Independent Living Center program. State funding available under the independent living program is subcontracted to 35 not-for-profit Independent Living Centers located

across New York State. These centers provide an array of services which assist persons with disabilities in functioning more independently in their communities. In addition to offering direct services to assist with independent living, centers work to increase architectural and programmatic access to existing services offered by other agencies in their communities.

Business and Industry Outreach

The Coordinator of **Business and Industry Outreach** develops program initiatives between VESID and business and industry. The full-time role of this specialized division is to significantly increase employment opportunities for persons with disabilities in our State by developing agreements and programs with major corporations as well as small businesses. Linkages are developed with Chambers of Commerce, State and local job councils, and other relevant participants.

Office of Policy and Program Development

The Assistant Commissioner for Policy and Program Development is responsible for three major program functions: Policy Development and Coordination; Quality Assurance; and Program Development, Technical Assistance and Support Services.

Policy Development and Coordination

The Coordinator of **Policy Development and Coordination** is responsible for all the planning, policy development, and interagency activities within VESID. Within this Division, the **Interagency Agreements Unit** develops and administers agreements with each of the relevant State agencies providing service to persons with disabling conditions. This brings a comprehensive focus to all persons of all ages with disabling conditions.

The **Policy Development and Evaluation Unit** coordinates the process by which policies are developed and implemented within VESID. Policies, which set forth the parameters for administration, service delivery, and provider practices, must be statutorily accurate, responsive to the needs of consumers, consistent, clear and concise, supportive of professional judgment, feasible, and widely publicized. Since VESID is only one of the major agencies serving persons with disabilities, the development of policy must be carefully linked with such development in other agencies and other offices of the Department. The policy development process must include all units of VESID that play a role in coordinating and translating policies into practice in the field.

The **Plan and Grant Development Unit** develops all the plans for VESID, including a comprehensive State Plan for services for individuals with disabilities, the VESID operational plan, and a Departmentwide plan for ensuring access for individuals with disabilities to all educational and cultural programs and services available to the public at large.

The Plan and Grant Development Unit also coordinates appropriate VESID office staff and other State agencies to develop requests for proposals and other funding opportunities. This Unit coordinates the SED Intra-Agency Council and the Intra-Agency Liaison Group which is comprised of representatives of all offices of the Department. From an organizational perspective, the Intra-Agency Liaison Group is unique. Although housed within VESID, it is staffed by individuals officially employed in other offices in the Department. These individuals serve as liaison officers to each of the major offices in the State Education Department to increase physical and programmatic access for individuals with disabilities to all Department programs and services.

Quality Assurance

The Coordinator of **Quality Assurance** oversees the monitoring of each of the programs that receives funds through VESID from various State or Federal sources.

Within this Division, the **Monitoring Unit** is responsible for on-site reviews of compliance with statutory and/or regulatory requirements and adherence to program and administrative procedures. These reviews focus on the accessibility and quality of services being provided to consumers.

The **Service Review Unit** assures responsiveness to and early resolution of individual consumer complaints. This unit follows up on complaints made by consumers or families in an attempt to resolve issues on an informal local level.

Program Development, Technical Assistance and Support Services

The Coordinator of **Program Development, Technical Assistance and Support Services** is responsible for training and outreach programs, as well as linkages with other segments of the educational service delivery system.

The **Training and Outreach Unit** trains both Department and contract service providers on current policies, as well as on state-of-the-art professional information necessary for effective service delivery. This unit also conducts ongoing public information efforts so that individuals throughout the State are aware of the services available throughout the State Education Department and how to access them efficiently.

The **Research, Review and Dissemination Unit** is responsible for current information on new trends, developments, research, and publications in the field of educational and rehabilitative services for individuals with disabilities.

Another key unit in this area, **Educational Institution Linkages**, is dedicated to increasing and formalizing linkages with other components of the educational system including schools, colleges, libraries, museums, and adult education programs. This unit emphasizes increased accessibility to all aspects of the educational system, many of which may not have been traditionally available to people with disabilities.

VESID DISTRICT OFFICES

VESID District Office addresses, phone numbers and District Office Managers are listed below. If you can't reach a District Office, or want more information, call 1-800-222-JOBS. The Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, religion, creed, disability, marital status, veteran status, national origin, race, sexual orientation, or gender in the educational programs and activities which it operates.

ALBANY DISTRICT OFFICE
Thomas Paduano, Manager
55 Elk Street, Room 301
Albany, New York 12207
(518) 473-8097
TTY: (518) 473-8467

SOUTHERN TIER DISTRICT OFFICE
Richard Andres, Manager

BINGHAMTON OFFICE
92 Hawley Street
Binghamton, New York 13901
(607) 773-7830
TTY: (607) 773-7998

ELMIRA OFFICE
110 West Second Street
Elmira, New York 14901
(607) 734-5294
V/TTY: (607) 734-4676

BRONX DISTRICT OFFICE
George Cortright, Acting Manager
1500 Pelham Parkway South
1st Floor
Bronx, New York 10461
(212) 931-3500
TTY: (212) 828-4003

BROOKLYN DISTRICT OFFICE
Danna Mitchell, Manager
111 Livingston Street
23rd Floor
Brooklyn, New York 11201
(718) 834-6550
TTY: (718) 834-6562

BUFFALO DISTRICT OFFICE
Duane Reggentine, Manager
125 Main Street, 8th Floor
State Office Building
Buffalo, New York 14203
(716) 847-3294
TTY: (716) 847-1495

BUFFALO PSYCHIATRIC CENTER
400 Forest Avenue
Bldg. #10
Buffalo, New York 14213
(716) 885-9550 or 885-9555

HAUPPAUGE DISTRICT OFFICE
Jerold Donowitz, Manager
State Office Building
Veterans Highway
Hauppauge, New York 11788
(516) 360-6357
TTY: (516) 360-6370

RIVERHEAD OFFICE
Plaza 518
East Main Street
Riverhead, New York 11901
(516) 727-6496

HEMPSTEAD DISTRICT OFFICE
Leo Schechter, Manager
50 Clinton Street, Room 708
Hempstead, New York 11550
(516) 483-6510
TTY: (516) 483-6087

MALONE DISTRICT OFFICE
John Ray, Manager
East Main Street Road
Rt. 1, Box 39
Malone, New York 12953
(518) 483-3530
V/TTY: (518) 483-6070

MANHATTAN DISTRICT OFFICE
John Bertrand, Manager
116 West 32nd Street, 6th Floor
New York, New York 10001
(212) 630-2300
TTY: (212) 630-2378

STATEN ISLAND OFFICE
1139 Hylan Boulevard
Staten Island, New York 10305
(718) 816-4800

HARLEM OFFICE
163 West 125th Street
7th Floor, Room 713
New York, New York 10027
(212) 870-4420

MID-HUDSON DISTRICT OFFICE
Harriet Fein, Manager
120 Dutchess Turnpike
Canterbury Plaza, 1st Floor
Poughkeepsie, New York 12603
(914) 452-5325
TTY: (914) 452-2910

KINGSTON OFFICE
65 Albany Avenue-Suite E
Kingston, New York 12401
(914) 339-4270
TTY: (914) 339-4254

MIDDLETOWN OFFICE
280 Route 211 East
Middletown, New York 10940
(914) 343-7951
TTY: (914) 343-4969

QUEENS DISTRICT OFFICE
George Cortright, Acting Manager
One LeFrak Plaza
59-17 Junction Blvd.
20th Floor
Corona, New York 11368
(718) 271-9346
TTY: (718) 271-9799

ROCHESTER DISTRICT OFFICE
Paul Pfrommer, Manager
109 South Union Street, 2nd Floor
Rochester, New York 14607
(716) 238-2900
TTY: (716) 325-6278

SYRACUSE DISTRICT OFFICE
Marvin Reed, Manager
333 East Washington Street
Room 230
State Office Building
Syracuse, New York 13202
(315) 428-4179
TTY: (315) 426-2155

ONONDAGA PLAZA OFFICE
(Same address as above)

UTICA DISTRICT OFFICE
David Segalla, Acting Manager
State Office Building
207 Genesee Street, Room 801
Utica, New York 13501
(315) 793-2536
TTY: (315) 793-2667

JOHNSTOWN OFFICE
2 South Market Street
Johnstown, New York 12095
(518) 736-1039

WHITE PLAINS DISTRICT OFFICE
Sandra Countee, Manager
55 Church Street, 3rd Floor
White Plains, New York 10601
(914) 946-1313
TTY: (914) 946-1520

ROCKLAND OFFICE
30 Orangetown Center
Orangeburg, New York 10962
(914) 359-1042
TTY: (914) 359-1703

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON VOCATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Margery Ames
New York, New York

Bruce Blower
Hauppauge, New York

Marc Brandt
Delmar, New York

Maureen Campbell-Korves
New York, New York

Edward Cleary
New York, New York

Susan Finisdore
Spring Valley, New York

Martin Florsheim
Brooklyn, New York

Michael Fox
Albany, New York

Louise Friedman
Mineola, New York

Diane Gaines
Hempstead, New York

Albert Henry
New York, New York

Fern Khan
New York, New York

David Klim
Syracuse, New York

Ken Kunken
Rockville Centre, New York

Sue Lehr
Tully, New York

Edwin Martin
Albertson, New York

Michael Parker
New York, New York

Lee Peters
Syracuse, New York

Jose Rivera
Brooklyn, New York

James Rogers
Albany, New York

Virginia Rossuck
Latham, New York

Joseph Ryan
Buffalo, New York

Mark Scheinberg
Whitestone, New York

James R. Sheldon, Jr.
Buffalo, New York

Neil Slater
Great Neck, New York

James Stowell
Port Chester, New York

Wendy Teabout
Schenectady, New York

Mary Wambach
Poughkeepsie, New York

John Wingate
New York, New York

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS

Frances Berko
Albany, New York

Jack Ryan
Albany, New York

Margarita Mayo
Albany, New York

Clarence J. Sundram
Albany, New York

INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTERS

ALBANY CENTER

Todd Eggert
Executive Director
Capital District Center for Independence
West Mall Office
845 Central Avenue
Albany, New York 12206
(518) 459-6422

AMSTERDAM CENTER

Bonnie Page
Executive Director
Independent Living Center of Amsterdam
12 Chestnut Street
Amsterdam, New York 12010
(518) 842-3561

AUBURN CENTER

Virginia Ellis
Executive Director
Options for Independence
55 Market Street
Auburn, New York 13021
(315) 255-3447

BATAVIA CENTER

Linda Olson
Executive Director
Batavia Center for Independent Living
61 Swan Street
Batavia, New York 14020
(716) 343-4524

BINGHAMTON CENTER

Maria Dibble
Executive Director
Southern Tier Independence Center
107 Chenango Street
Binghamton, New York 13901
(607) 724-2111

BRONX CENTER

Bobbi Linn
Executive Director
Bronx Independent Living Services, Inc.
3525 Decatur Avenue
Bronx, New York 10467
(212) 515-2800

BROOKLYN CENTER

Denise McQuade
Executive Director
Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled
408 Jay Street
Brooklyn, New York 11201
(718) 625-7500

BUFFALO CENTER

Douglas Usiak
Executive Director
Western New York Independent Living Project, Inc.
3108 Main Street
Buffalo, New York 14214
(716) 836-0822

CORNING CENTER

Raymond Cotter
Acting Executive Director
Assistance and Information for the Disabled
271 East First Street
Corning, New York 14830
(607) 962-8225

DELAWARE CENTER

Richard Zachmeyer
Executive Director
Catskill Center for Independence
P.O. Box 1247, Route 23 Southside
Oneonta, New York 13820
(607) 432-8000

GLENS FALLS CENTER

Brad Williams
Executive Director
Glens Falls Independent Living Center
P.O. Box 453
Glens Falls, New York 12801
(518) 792-3537

HARLEM CENTER

Loretta Murray
Executive Director
c/o Harlem Hospital Center
506 Lenox Avenue
New York, New York 10037
(212) 491-1744

ITHACA CENTER

Lenore Schwager
Executive Director
Finger Lakes Independence Center
609 West Clinton Street, Clinton W. Plaza
Suite 112
Ithaca, New York 14850
(607) 272-2433

MANHATTAN CENTER

Marilyn Saviola
Executive Director
Center for Independence of the Disabled
in New York
841 Broadway, Room 205
New York, New York 10003
(212) 674-2300

MASSENA CENTER

Jeffrey Reifensnyder
Executive Director
Massena Independent Living Center
One North Main Street
Massena, New York 13662
(315) 764-9442

MIDDLETOWN CENTER

Donna Miller
Executive Director
Western Orange County Center for
Independent Living
R.D. #1, Box 144c, Route 6
Slate Hill, New York 10973
(914) 355-2030

JAMESTOWN CENTER

Marie Carrubba
Executive Director
Southwestern Independent Living Center, Inc.
878 North Main Street
Jamestown, New York 14701
(716) 661-3010

KINGSTON CENTER

Joan Gundersen
Executive Director
Resource Center for Accessible Living
602 Albany Avenue
Kingston, New York 12401
(914) 331-0541

LONG ISLAND CENTER

Patricia Moore
Executive Director
Long Island Center for Independent
Living, Inc.
3601 Hempstead Turnpike
Levittown, New York 11756
(516) 796-0144

NEWBURGH CENTER

Doug Hovey
Executive Director
Eastern Orange County Center for Independent
Living
5 Washington Terrace
Newburgh, New York 12550
(914) 565-1162

NIAGARA FALLS CENTER

Ronald Clark
Executive Director
Niagara Frontier Center for Independent Living, Inc.
1522 Main Street
Niagara Falls, New York 14305
(716) 284-2452

OLEAN CENTER

Anna Armstrong
Executive Director
Directions in Independent Living
180 N. Union St.
Olean, New York 14760
(716) 373-4602

PLATTSBURGH CENTER

Cecily S. Feldman
Executive Director
North Country Center for Independence
159 Margaret Street
Plattsburgh, New York 12901
(518) 563-9058

POUGHKEEPSIE CENTER

Mary Wambach
Executive Director
Taconic Resources for Independence
80 Washington Street
Poughkeepsie, New York 12601
(914) 452-3913

QUEENS CENTER

Michael McIntyre
Executive Director
Queens Independent Living Center
140-40 Queens Boulevard
Jamaica, New York 11435
(718) 658-2526

ROCHESTER CENTER

Timothy Weider
Executive Director
Rochester Center for Independent Living
758 South Avenue
Rochester, New York 14620
(716) 442-6470

ROCKLAND CENTER

Susan Finisdore
Executive Director
Rockland Independent Living Center
235 North Main Street
Spring Valley, New York 10977
(914) 426-0707

STATEN ISLAND CENTER

Dorothy Doran
Executive Director
Staten Island Center for Independent Living
150 Walker Street
Staten Island, New York 10302
(718) 720-9016

SUFFOLK CENTER

June Roberts
Executive Director
Self Initiated Living Options, Inc.
3241 Route 112, Building #7
Medford, New York 11763
(516) 698-1310

SYRACUSE CENTER

John Bateman-Ferry
Executive Director
ARISE
501 East Fayette Street
Syracuse, New York 13202
(315) 472-3171

TROY CENTER

Denise Figueroa
Executive Director
Troy Resource Center for Independent Living
Troy Atrium
Broadway and 4th Street
Troy, New York 12180
(518) 274-0701

UTICA CENTER

Burt Danovitz
Executive Director
Resource Center for Independent Living
Columbia Place
409 Columbia Street
Utica, New York 13502
(315) 797-4642

WATERTOWN CENTER

Catharine A. Keane
Executive Director
Northern Regional Center for Independent Living
Suite 400
Woolworth Building
Watertown, New York 13601
(315) 785-8703

WHITE PLAINS CENTER

Joseph Bravo
Executive Director
Westchester Independent Living Center
297 Knollwood Road
White Plains, New York 10607
(914) 682-3926

YONKERS CENTER

Harry Kaplan
Executive Director
Westchester Disabled on the Move
984 North Broadway
Yonkers, New York 10701
(914) 968-4717

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON INDEPENDENT LIVING

James Barry
White Plains, New York

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Syracuse, New York

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